TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY IN EUROPE:
a Voice of Higher Education Institutions

Edited by
Brian Hudson and Pavel Zgaga

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Contents

Introduction

This monograph has been written and published as a result of the growing co-operation within the *Teacher Education Policy in Europe* (TEPE) Network. The initiative to set up the TEPE Network was agreed in 2006 at Umeå University (Sweden) and the first TEPE conference was organised at the University of Tallinn (Estonia) from 1 to 3 February 2007 within a relatively small group of participants from eight countries.[1] The second conference was hosted by the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia) from 21 to 23 February 2008[2]. The conference brought together a significantly larger group of some 100 participants from 23 countries representing most European regions to discuss the current situation of Teacher Education in Europe, look at the future and formulate recommendations for Teacher Education policy at the local, national and European levels.

A decision was taken within the network to publish a monograph on Teacher Education Policy in Europe as the next step. A process of peer review took place in spring 2008 which resulted in the selection of 18 papers to be developed for publication in this monograph. These papers cover a number of key issues and have been written, individually or collectively, by 32 authors from several different European regions. There are three main *threads* running through these papers which cover the following themes: *mobility and the European Dimension in Teacher Education*, *evaluation cultures in Teacher Education* and *advancing research in and on Teacher Education*. This monograph is published as an edition in the Umeå University Faculty of Teacher Education series *Monographs on the Journal of Research in Teacher Education* (Monografier, Tidskrift för lärarutbildning och forskning) as a result of the joint work of both faculties from Umeå University and the University of Ljubljana. The publication has been made possible by financial support from *the European Social Fund* and *the Slovenian Ministry of Education and Sport.*

The conclusions and recommendations from the 2008 TEPE conference focus on the need to improve the image of teaching, the status of the

[1] http://tepe.wordpress.com/2007/01/30/tepe-workshop-in-tallinn/

[2] http://www.pef.uni-lj.si/tepe2008/

teaching profession and the importance of involving Teacher Education institutions as partners in the process of policy development. In particular, they highlight the need to advance research in and on Teacher Education, promote mobility and the European Dimension in Teacher Education and to support the development of cultures for quality improvement in Teacher Education. The Conclusions and Recommendations from the conference are included in full in the Appendix (see pages 365-369). The conference on one hand and this monograph on the other represent the culmination of a series of activities and events that can be traced back over a period of more than ten years.

Prior to the 1990s, Teacher Education in Europe was rarely an issue of European and/or international co-operation in (higher) education. It was mainly a closed 'national affair' and predominantly a non-university type of study. Within the process of Europe gradually 'coming together', for a long time education in general remained on the margins. Vocational education received a little more interest quite early on because vocational qualifications were very important for economic co-operation while general education – as well as teacher education – got a 'green light' at the European co-operation crossroads with new provisions in the *Maastricht Treaty of 1992* (Art. 126):

'*The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging co-operation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action*'. This action '*shall be aimed at:*

- *developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States;*
- *encouraging mobility of students and teachers, inter alia by encouraging the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study;*
- *promoting co-operation between educational establishments;*
- *developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems of the Member States;*
- *encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socioeducational instructors;*
- *encouraging the development of distance education*.'

At a practical level, a new era came with the introduction of the *Erasmus*, *Socrates* and *Leonardo* programmes at the end of the 1980s and in the 1990s. Direct collaboration between education institutions from EU

countries rose substantially. The 1990s were, at the same time, the beginning of the period of European enlargement. It was also very important for Teacher Education that special EU co-operation programmes were launched which supported broader co-operation in education among EU and non-EU countries. The *Tempus programme*, for example, has offered many opportunities to strengthen co-operation between Teacher Education institutions – until the present day from more than 50 countries (and not only limited to European countries).[3]

In the following section we describe – in chronological order – some cases of successful networking and/or co-operation in concrete projects between associations and organisations with an interest in Teacher Education and particularly those between institutions of Teacher Education from member states of today's EU-27.

The *Association for Teacher Education in Europe* (ATEE)[4] is today a well-known non-governmental European organisation with over 600 members from more than 40 countries, which focuses on the professional development of teachers and teacher educators. In the early 1990s, the ATEE produced a comparative study on teacher education curricula in the EU member states[5] which was very important in the early years of greater European co-operation in teacher education and it also remains an important reference group today. The study was supported financially by the European Commission and the ATTE continues to play a creative role in European co-operation in Teacher Education.

At the beginning of the 1990s, a similar attempt was made from a trade-unionist perspective. The *European Trades Union Committee for Education* (ETUCE) published a text on *Teacher Education in Europe*[6] which dealt with a range of issues such as the organisation as well as contents of

[3] The *Life Long Learning Programme* (LLP) of the EU, a successor of Socrates and Leonardo, today includes 31 countries (27 EU member states; Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway as the EFTA and EEA countries and Turkey as the candidate country) while 27 countries of Eastern and South-east Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa co-operate within the framework of the *Tempus programme*.

[4] http://www.atee.org/

[5] Miller, S. and Taylor, Ph. *The Teacher Education Curricula in the Member States of the European Community*. ATEE Cahiers, No. 3, 1993. Brussels: ATEE (115 pp.).

[6] ETUCE [1994]. *Teacher Education in Europe*. Brussels: ETUCE (101 pp).

Teacher Education, the European dimension and mobility, teachers' professionalism, equal opportunities and intercultural education. The concluding chapter (12) focused on the role of European institutions and programmes. These issues were in the central focus of the early 1990s and were important in building stepping stones for the further development of European co-operation in Teacher Education.

The European Union's Socrates-Erasmus programme opened new perspectives for European co-operation in general education and made good progress at the beginning of the 1990s, in particular through the programme action on '*university co-operation projects on subjects of mutual interest*'. Similarly as in other areas of higher education, a thorough reflection on Teacher Education was prepared in this context during the mid-1990s. In 1994, within a larger framework of investigating the effects of the Erasmus programme, the European Commission funded a pilot project in this area: the *Sigma – European Universities' Network*. Within the network, 15 national reports[7] were produced for an Evaluation Conference which took place in June 1995, the proceedings of which were edited by Theodor Sander and published by Universität Osnabrück.[8] These reports presented an extremely variegated image of the teacher education systems in the EU-15 of that time. Reports focused on initial teacher education as well as on in-service training in national contexts, but also reflected on new needs and perspectives in Europe.

In addition, a special 'European Report' was added to the publication dealing with European co-operation in Teacher Education of that time, particularly with regard to perspectives of the *Erasmus programme* in the special area of Teacher Education.[9] This publication was based on the lessons learned from the development of the RIF (Réseau d'Institutions de Formation – Network of Teacher Training Institutions) which developed steadily from January 1990 onwards, following the organisation of the first European Summer University for teacher educators in October 1989 at the Hogeschool Gelderland, Nijmegen (NL)

[7] Reports from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

[8] European Conference *Teacher Education in Europe: Evaluation and Perspectives*. Universität Osnabrück, June 23-24, 1995.

[9] Mark Delmartino and Yves Beernaert. *Teacher Education and the ERASMUS Programme. Role, Achievements, Problems, and Perspectives of Teacher Education Programmes in ERASMUS. The RIF: Networking in Teacher Education.*

under the ERASMUS programme. As such, this publication is one of the most relevant sources of information on European co-operation in Teacher Education for the period up until the mid-1990s.

Subsequently with the aim of enhancing the European dimension of university studies as part of the *Socrates-Erasmus programme* (Action 1), the European Commission supported 28 Thematic Networks in the 1996/97 academic year. The *Thematic Network on Teacher Education in Europe* (TNTEE) was the only network devoted exclusively to teacher education. Its main objective was to establish a flexible multilingual transnational forum for the development of Teacher Education in Europe by linking together as many universities and other institutions as possible. The network was co-ordinated by the Board of Teacher Education and Research, Umeå University, Sweden.

The sub-networks of the TNTEE focused on: (1) the culture and politics of professional formation; (2) the development of innovative strategies of co-operation between TE-institutions, schools and education services; (3) promoting lifelong learning in and through teacher education: evolving models of professional development; (4) Teacher Education as a powerful learning environment – changing the learning culture of Teacher Education; (5) searching for a missing link – subject didactics as the sciences of a teaching profession; (6) developing a 'reflective practice' of teachers' work and teacher education by partnerships between researchers and practitioners; (7) intercultural education in Teacher Education; and (8) gender and Teacher Education.

Within the TNTEE a new evaluation study of Teacher Education in EU countries was made at the end of the 1990s.[10] However, the most visible and most influential product of the TNTEE was the *Green Paper on Teacher Education in Europe*[11] – the first policy paper on Teacher Education in Europe produced in collaboration between experts from European Teacher Education institutions. The TNTEE formally ended in 1999; it was labelled a 'success story' and has been the largest network in

[10] Sander, Theodor (Ed.). *Teacher Education in Europe in the late 1990s. Evaluation and Quality*. TNTEE Publications. Volume 2, No. 2, December 1999.

[11] Buchberger, F., Campos, B.P., Kallos, D., Stephenson, J. (Eds.). *Green Paper on Teacher Education in Europe*. High Quality Teacher Education fro High Quality Education and Training. Thematic Network on Teacher Education in Europe. Umeå universitet, 2000.

Teacher Education so far. It has influenced further co-operation and networking and its website[12] is – after many years – still operative and well visited.

In May 2000, as part of the initiatives launched by the Portuguese Presidency, a Conference on Teacher Education Policies in the European Union and Quality of Lifelong Learning was held in Loulé (Algarve). The conference was attended by representatives of ministries of education (including Teacher Education representatives), the European Commission and representatives of different international organisations active in Teacher Education. During the conference the *European Network of Teacher Education Policies* (ENTEP) was launched which aimed to reinforce ongoing European co-operation in education and to develop the political dimension of Teacher Education.

The conference adopted the *General Framework of the Network* (2000) which has been used as the ENTEP programme until the present day. In the *Annex* to this document, a number of issues are listed which became the bases for content work within the network:

- *new challenges to the professional teacher profile;*
- *shortage of teacher education candidates;*
- *higher education and school partnerships;*
- *continuous teacher education systems;*
- *teacher education and teacher career advancement;*
- *teacher mobility;*
- *issues concerning equal opportunities; and*
- *research and graduate studies related to teacher education and teachers' work*.

The ENTEP has developed its activities in the field of teacher education policies. It is an advisory/reference group that acts as a sounding board for the European Commission and individual member states. At the European level, it promotes the exchange of information, addresses issues of common concern, works on the construction of convergences etc. Within the member states, it contributes to a European perspective on the debate concerning Teacher Education policies. In principle, each member state has one ENTEP representative (in some cases they are from national ministries of education, in other cases from Teacher

[12] See http://tntee.umu.se

Education institutions). A website[13] has been established that provides information, news from ENTEP meetings and publications etc.

A further relevant body is *Eurydice*[14] – *the information network on education in Europe* – which was established as long ago as 1980 by the European Commission and EU member states to boost co-operation by improving understanding of educational systems and policies. It is a network consisting of a European Unit and national units. Since 1995, it has been an integral part of the Socrates programme. The network covers the education systems of the EU member states, the three EEA countries and the EU candidate countries involved in the Socrates programme. Eurydice has prepared and published several country descriptions on the organisation of teacher education as well as comparative studies on these topics, e.g.:

- *Teaching staff / Volume 3. European glossary on education* (2001; national terms);
- *Reforms of the teaching profession: a historical survey (1975-2002) / Supplementary report. The teaching profession in Europe: Profile, trends and concerns. General lower secondary education* (2002 – country descriptions);
- *Reforms of the teaching profession: a historical survey (1975-2002) / Supplementary report. The teaching profession in Europe: Profile, trends and concerns. General lower secondary education* (2005 – comparative study);
- *Initial training and transition to working life / Volume 1. The teaching profession in Europe: Profile, trends and concerns. General lower secondary education* (2002);
- *Supply and demand / Volume 2. The teaching profession in Europe: Profile, trends and concerns. General lower secondary education* (2002);
- *Working conditions and pay / Volume 3. The teaching profession in Europe: Profile, trends and concerns. General lower secondary education* (2003);
- *Keeping teaching attractive for the 21st century / Volume 4. The teaching profession in Europe: Profile, trends and concerns. General lower secondary education* (2004);

[13] See http://entep.bildung.hessen.de/ (accessed June 2008). The home server is changing as the network co-ordination is changing.

[14] See Eurydice portal http://www.eurydice.org/.

- *Quality Assurance in Teacher Education in Europe* (2006).

One of the most direct outcomes of the TNTEE network at the level of institutional co-operation was an Erasmus project EDIL (later EUDORA) which aimed to develop joint European modules at doctoral level. The project was co-ordinated in the first phase (2000-02) by Umeå University as the *Europeisk Doctorat en Lärarutbildning (EDIL)* project and in the second phase (2002-05) by the Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in Upper Austria, Linz as the *European Doctorate in Teaching and Teacher Education (EUDORA)* funded as Socrates / Erasmus Advanced Curriculum Development projects. The core group was based on a consortium of 10 Teacher Education faculties (or other institutions) from various European countries, although other faculties and institutions were welcomed to join in the activities. Within this project, five intensive programmes and modules were developed and conducted, each on several occasions:

- BIP: *Analysis of educational policies in a comparative educational perspective;*
- IMUN: *Innovative mother tongue didactics of less frequently spoken languages in a comparative perspective;*
- ALHE: *Active Learning in Higher Education;*
- ELHE/LEARN: *e-Learning in Higher Education;*
- MATHED: *Researching the teaching and learning of mathematics; and*
- SI: *Researching social inclusion/exclusion and social justice in education.*

Summer schools were organised in various countries from 2002 onwards; the largest one in 2005 (Tolmin, Slovenia) involved about 100 doctoral students and staff who worked in three parallel modules (BIP, IMUN, MATHED). The EDIL/EUDORA experience[15] constructed a cornerstone to be considered for an eventual full joint doctoral programme in European Teacher Education in the near future.

The Teacher Education Policy in Europe (TEPE)[16] Network is one of the most recent initiatives in this field. It is an academic network that builds on the work and community developed from a number of previous European collaborative projects in the domain of Teacher Education

[15] See http://www.eudoraportal.org/

[16] See http://tepe.wordpress.com/

policy: TNTEE, EDIL and EUDORA. The TEPE Network was formally established at its inaugural meeting in Tallinn in February 2007 with an overarching aim to develop Teacher Education policy recommendations from an institutional point of view.

At its inauguration, the Network stressed that '*Europeanisation in higher education has reached a point in time which requires a range of responses at the institutional and disciplinary level. The current situations demand that such responses are based on academic (self-)reflection and that research methods are applied in the process of preparing and discussing reforms in European universities. The academic world is able to provide policy analysis in order to strengthen a process of decision making at institutional level as well as a process of European concerting. Education Policy is a genuine task for higher education institutions today*'.

It was also stressed that '*during a period when we move steadily closer to achieving the goal of the European Higher Education Area, declared by the Bologna Process, it is most urgent that these issues are addressed again, from today's point of view, encountering questions and dilemmas of today and learning from rich European contexts*'.

As indicated at the start of this introduction, the TEPE Conference organised by the University of Ljubljana in February 2008 represented the culmination of a series of activities and events that have extended back over a period of more than ten years. This monograph marks a significant moment in the development of the Teacher Education Policy community in Europe, which has brought together representatives of various stakeholders including Teacher Education institutions, students, school teachers, trade unions as well as representatives of the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the European Training Foundation and the European Network on Teacher Education Policies (ENTEP). We trust that this publication will mark a new chapter in the continuing dialogue at the trans-national level with the aims of advancing teaching and teacher education and improving the quality of student learning in Europe.

Brian Hudson and Pavel Zgaga

June 2008

Mobility and the European Dimension in Teacher Education

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1 Introduction

Again and again, the time comes when we have to reflect on the road behind us and to consider our future path. There are several signals and symptoms that indicate we are living in such times: also with regard to teacher education in Europe. A lot has changed within teacher education as well as in its broader societal and political context during the last two or three decades. On one hand, teacher education has responded to the challenge of *quality education for all* while, on the other, it has extended its traditional social responsibility – the advancement of *national* education – by becoming involved in the process of *Europeanisation* (European co-operation in the broadest sense).

When from this perspective we compare teacher education in Europe of the late 1980s and of today, at least four important characteristics can be identified:

- *teacher education* is no longer an isolated training area but is (and should be considered as) an *integral part of higher education and research sectors*;
- higher education (and research) systems in 46 European countries are *on the way towards a common European Higher Education* and *Research Area* (the Bologna Process as a 'convergence process'; European Research Area initiative etc.);[1]

[1] The EHEA (*European Higher Education Area*) is an initiative of the national ministries of education (today 46 countries: a circle much broader than the European Union with its current 27 member countries) with the important involvement of 'partners' (e.g. European University Association, the National Unions of Students in Europe etc.) while the ERA (*European Research Area*) is an initiative of the European Union. The Berlin conference of the Bologna Process (2003) agreed that both initiatives should be linked together; however, in political and administrative terms there is still a certain discrepancy (or at least a difference) between them as there is also a difference

- *the Europeanisation and internationalisation of teacher education* in particular is a much more complex and complicated process than *Europeanisation and internationalisation in higher education* in general; and
- a consideration of these issues is *not* an exclusive *European affair* but should also be seen as important from the *global point of view*.

After two decades of changes and developments, teacher education in Europe is again being challenged by new developments on a large scale. Is it able to continue to compete? A lot of hard work was done in the 1980s and 1990s in systems and institutions across Europe; yet, it seems that it has produced a kind of *tiredness* – as if teacher education needs some rest now to enjoy the results it was fighting for in previous years. I fear this could be a terrible mistake. Teacher education has caught the advanced wagons of the 'academic train' but could easily remain forgotten at a small, remote rural railway station as the 'train' continues along its way very fast and driven by complex processes, e.g. Europeanisation, globalisation, academic competitiveness etc.

In this paper, we will address these new challenges and focus mainly on issues of mobility and the European dimension with regard to teacher education. However, this is impossible without establishing the broader context.

2 Establishing the context: some dichotomies on Europe and education

Modern higher education systems – as well as education systems in general – were established as *national* systems, i.e., not as 'universal' (as in the Middle Ages) or 'global' (like perhaps tomorrow's) systems. In the modern period, the specific troubles people can encounter as they try e.g. to gain recognition of their qualifications in another system have provided ample evidence that the *national character of education systems* in principle contradicts the *'universal' character of human knowledge*, understanding and skills. On the other hand, today it seems that it also contradicts the *'global' character of the economy*. Yet both contradictions are not necessarily based on the same grounds.

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between the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Process (i.e., the agenda '*Education and Training 2010*' as an important part of the Lisbon Process).

These contradictions are being more and more discussed today. As a result of the dominating *economic globalisation*, the differences of national markets are disappearing; national markets are increasingly levelled to the global market. Parallel to this process and pressed by a globalising labour market, national qualifications are also being levelled on the global scale. On the other hand, in the globalising world of today the concept of universal knowledge is taking on a new meaning and bringing new opportunities (e.g. *cultural globalisation*). International co-operation in (higher) education has long traditions; for a long time it was mainly co-operation and a relatively marginal exchange between *different* systems. It has changed substantially since calls for fewer obstacles and greater mobility (and compatibility) between systems were made somewhere in the 1980s. Yet, obstacles and incompatibilities still exist today.

In this regard, Europe – being divided for centuries but associating in various modes today – could be a particularly interesting case. Since the early 1990s, European national (not only) education systems have encountered new challenges: the European 'internal internationalisation' (as the *Europeanisation* process could be also called) entered various agendas; including in education. Two main political determinants of these developments can be identified: an agreement within the 'small' European Union of previous times that '[t]he Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging co-operation between member states and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action'[2] as well as deep political changes in Eastern Europe symbolically represented by the fall of the Berlin Wall. However, it is impossible to present in this text all the details of and repercussions for the broader area of education.

Since 1999, the most distinctive expression of the *Europeanisation process* in the context of higher education has been established as the *Bologna Process*: 'building a common European higher education area until 2010'. It has been a response answer to 'internal' (i.e. European) challenges, first of all, a call for the convergence of different and at some points even incompatible national systems but, simultaneously, it has been also a response to global processes (e.g. the issue of competitiveness and attractiveness in higher education on the global scale). Two years remain to the mentioned important deadline; European higher education

[2] Maastricht Treaty (1992), Art. 126.

systems have already achieved a more comparable and compatible level. There is a strong consensus that the Bologna Process has contributed a lot to this goal.

However, there is broad evidence that European 'coming together' in (higher) education opens also a number of new dilemmas. Step by step, the Europeanisation of national systems has become a matter of fact (not so much due to traditional bilateral 'inter-national' co-operation but due to genuine European co-operation in education and research, e.g. through Erasmus, Tempus, research framework programmes, etc.). Despite an obvious progress, it can't be foreseen today that at certain points European countries jealously stick with their traditional national systems. This is particularly true when we analyse *teacher education* as a part of higher education and as the key point at which Europe would really need more compatibility – not only to strengthen mobility but also to strengthen cultural dialogue by means of education.

As mentioned in the introduction, teacher education is considered here to be part of European higher education at large. Therefore, to address more detailed questions on teacher education in the Europe of today it is important to check, at least briefly, at which point the Bologna Process has arrived to date. What are the main challenges to higher education in Europe which might also importantly refer to teacher education?

Much has been written about the general aims and features of the Bologna Process[3] and it will not be repeated here. European countries and their higher education institutions are already deep in the 'second half of the game'; EHEA as well as the ERA have now been announced to be established by 2010. It is no secret at all that a lot of questions remain to be answered at governmental and institutional levels. The *Trends 4 Report*[4] of 2005 already found that '[s]ome institutions chose to use the opportunity which the Bologna process presented in a very proactive manner, trying to optimise the institution's position with the help of the new framework for structural changes, while others refrained from reviewing their teaching and learning processes until it could no longer be avoided' (Reichert, Tauch, 2005, p. 41).

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[3] See the official Bologna website:
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/.

[4] There has been constant monitoring of the Bologna Process since 1999; the so-called '*Trends*' reports (provided by the European University Association) are among most important sources to analyse and comment on its developments and achievements.

Both proactive and passive approaches to pan-European dynamics in higher education, encouraging as well as concerning points can be found running parallel to each other. Discussions do not only take place at a general level of higher education systems at large but also at more down-to-earth horizons and in concrete areas (disciplines, professions). This is also the case in *teacher education*. The Tuning project,[5] for example, identified 'an anomalous situation with regard to Teacher Education within the context of the implementation of first and second ['Bologna'] cycles of degree awards. […] Although students may have accumulated a total of 240-320 ECTS in order to obtain their initial teacher education qualification, in a number of countries 300+ ECTS accumulated in this way does not result in a second cycle award' (Gonzales, Wagenaar, 2005, p. 77).[6] On the other side, it has also been noted that 'whilst European teachers work within a European context, we still know very little about their 'Europeanness'' (Schratz, 2005, p. 1).

The question '*What is a European Teacher*', as Michael Schratz noted in his discussion paper for the ENTEP[7], 'is not intended to create a "standardised teacher model"'. This position is not limited to teacher education only but is an underlying principle of the Bologna Process as well as of any other 'Europeanisation agenda' today. Diversity is often stressed in today's discussions as 'the European richness'; a real matter of concern is the incompatibility of systems and systemic obstacles which hinder the mutual enjoyment of this 'richness'. Both the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Process deny that any progress towards a common European Higher Education Area would be possible if trans-national (legal) *harmonisation* is taken as the starting point and in a top-down approach. This would be simply politically incorrect within the European reality of today. On the contrary, it is usually stressed that 'Bologna' is a *voluntary action* of European countries and institutions and

[5] The *Tuning project* (launched in 2001) is described as 'the universities' contribution to the Bologna Process'; over 100 representatives of European universities joined together to develop new approaches to teaching and learning in a number of disciplines and/or study areas (including education and teacher education) and to bring into 'tune' previously incompatible study paths from various institutions. Tuning has also produced echoes outside Europe, e.g. in Latin America. – See http://www.relint.deusto.es/TUNINGProject/index.htm.

[6] The final Tuning findings will soon be available as the project is ending in 2008; check the Tuning web site for news.

[7] ENTEP: *European Network on Teacher Education Policies*; an initiative of Ministries of Education from EU member states (launched in 1999). – See http://www.pa-feldkirch.ac.at/entep.

that the European dimension should not be an argument in favour of hard standardisation and/or implementation of 'a single European model': neither in the case of education systems generally nor of teacher education in particular. Instead, the Lisbon Process promoted the '*Open Method of Co-ordination*' (OMC) and mutual learning from best practices which is very important within the *Education and Training 2010* [8].

Therefore, Europeanisation processes and the Bologna Process in particular do not aim to transferring existing (legal) responsibilities for education to a trans-national body. National responsibility for education is a characteristic feature of all countries and will remain so at least for a reasonable period of time. The political reality in Europe (in the EU-27 and even more in the EU-46) depends on independent country states. Within the EU, a clear consensus has been reached that '[t]he Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging co-operation between Member States' (as already quoted above) while 'fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity' and 'excluding any harmonization of the laws and regulations of the Member States'.[9]

However, the issue is not so easy. It is true that there is *no trans-national legal harmonisation* 'from above' – but there is an obvious 'bottom-up' process of the *voluntary harmonisation* of systems. It seems absolutely necessary with regard to the highly consensual contemporary political goals, at least within the EU: 'In the new Europe of the knowledge society, citizens should be able to learn and work together throughout Europe, and make full use of their qualifications wherever they are' (Council…, 2002, p. 42). Yet, the process of strengthening the *convergence* and *compatibility* of *national higher education systems* is gradually shifting

[8] See http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et_2010_en.html .

[9] The Maastricht Treaty (1992), Art. 126. – Up to this point, politically reached as far back as in 1991-1992, no essential changes have occurred to date. While reading the highly disputed *Draft European Constitution* of 2003-2004, the Maastricht wording could be found with almost no changes; e.g.: 'The Union shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action. It shall fully respect the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity'. Etc. – See *Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe*, 2003, Art. III-182).

certain responsibilities – willingly or not – to a *trans-national (European) level*.

Let us consider an example. At the Bergen meeting (2005) a proposal was presented that 'a European register of quality assurance agencies will be produced' and a 'European Register Committee' would be established to act 'as a gatekeeper for the inclusion of agencies in the register' (ENQA, 2005, p. 5). The European Commission, on the other hand, proposed that higher education institutions 'should be given the freedom to choose an agency which meets their needs, provided that this agency figures in the Register' (Commission…, 2004, point D). There have also been discussions on 'the EHEA beyond 2010' that have led to a question that is not merely rhetorical: 'Can the European Higher Education Area be established as a sustainable structure without a formal/formally binding commitment from participating countries?'[10]

Together with a number of important issues, the last Bologna ministerial meeting (London, May 2007) politically confirmed the idea of the Register: 'We welcome the establishment of a register by the E4 group, working in partnership, based on their proposed operational model'. On the other side, it also recognised the importance of a discussion on the EHEA after 2010 and announced further, perhaps even more ambitious steps: 'We will take 2010 as an opportunity to reformulate the vision that motivated us in setting the Bologna Process in motion in 1999 and to make the case for an EHEA underpinned by values and visions that go beyond issues of structures and tools. We undertake to make 2010 an opportunity to reset our higher education systems on a course that looks beyond the immediate issues and makes them fit to take up the challenges that will determine our future' (London Communiqué, 2007).

There is no doubt that *national* authorities are still the most responsible actors in implementing the commonly agreed principles of the EHEA and the ERA, but it seems that their *exclusive* authority with regard to the governance of higher education systems has been relativised. Not only that a *trans-national level* has been established but *universities* and other higher education institutions as well as student organisations have achieved an important role in implementing the Bologna objectives.[11]

[10] Quoted from a 'Bologna' internal document of 27 April 2005 (in the author's archive).

[11] 'We [Ministers] underline the central role of higher education institutions, their staff and students as partners in the Bologna Process. Their role in the implementation of the

Gradual implementation of the commonly agreed guidelines and principles is coming to a point where the voice of higher education institutions – and also the voice of *disciplines* (*study areas*) – could be a decisive factor for the success of the whole enterprise. Some disciplines and/or study areas are already deeply involved in taking as good position as possible in a further run[12] – and *teacher education* should position itself within this process as well.

As decisions made at the macro-level are important and far reaching, it remains true that the new higher education reality will depend primarily on institutions. There are cases of good practice at the institutional – as well as the inter-institutional – level; a number of European development projects are running in support of curricular renewal and the organisation of studies but also in favour of the Europeanisation and internationalisation of higher education institutions and their provision.

Two key questions emerge against this background: (1) how far has the Bologna Process advanced; and (2) how much is the *specific area of teacher education* involved in these processes, in particular with regard to mobility and the European dimension? Both questions will be discussed below.

3 The emerging EHEA: developments and open issues

The early years of the Bologna Process were predominantly a period of developing *principles*. Since the Berlin Conference (2003), there has been a fast change of focus towards the *implementation* of principles; yet, this shift has also raised a question of *interpretation*. There is growing evidence that steps taken at national levels have not always been parallel and simultaneous or at least understood in the same way. The *Trends 4 Report* made an interesting observation about *conflicting interpretations*:

Process becomes all the more important now that the necessary legislative reforms are largely in place, and we encourage them to continue and intensify their efforts to establish the EHEA' (Bergen Communiqué, 2005).

[12] On one hand, there is a case of the so-called 'regulated professions' (at European level; e.g. medical doctors, nurses, architects etc.) while, on the other hand, there are non-governmental associations (agencies, organisations) like e.g. *Euroing*. Teacher education is a *nationally* regulated profession and there have been no European/trans-national associations in this area so far (ENTEP is not more than a consultation forum on behalf of ministries, not higher education institutions).

'Creating a system of easily readable and comparable degrees is a central – and for many even the essential – objective of the Bologna process. Since 1999, however, the experience of introducing two or three cycles to Europe's national higher education systems has demonstrated that there is […] ample room for different and at times conflicting interpretations regarding the duration and orientation of programmes. Especially the employability of 3 year Bachelor graduates continues to be an issue in many countries. […] There are various modes and speeds of introducing the new systems' (Reichert, Tauch, 2005, p. 11).

We will come back to this issue later; there is another point in *Trends 4* which attracts our immediate interest. Namely, there was another observation regarding *disciplinary and/or study area differences* when it comes to implementing the Bologna principles:

'Numerous institutions confirmed that the speed of (and motivation for) reforms is perceived very differently across some disciplines and faculties. In some universities the Humanities disciplines seem to have the least problems offering first- and second-cycle degrees; in others they find it almost impossible to do something meaningful at Bachelor level. The same is true for the regulated professions where professional bodies play a significant role in helping or hindering the introduction of the new degree structures' (Reichert, Tauch, 2005, p. 12).

In this context, Trends 4 also referred to *teacher education* and addressed an important issue:

'Overall, however, the situation is remarkably different from two or three years ago, when not only medicine, but also teacher training, engineering, architecture, law, theology, fine arts, psychology and some other disciplines were excluded from the two-cycle system in many countries. Today, if at all, this restriction seems to apply only to medicine (and related fields) in most countries. […] Teacher training and certain other disciplines still pose problems, in some national contexts more than others, and here national systems are experimenting with a variety of solutions' (Reichert, Tauch, 2005, p. 12).

The transition from agreed general principles to 'devil details' is always difficult and this has also been demonstrated within the Bologna Process. All disciplines, study areas and professional profiles are today confronted with pressures of 'urgent and immediate' implementation, yet each finds itself in a different position. So far, one of the spiciest questions for the majority of institutions (in many but not all European

countries; at least not at the same level of intensity) has been the *composition of study programmes* in the new 'Bologna' first and second cycles. The issue becomes tense when it is observed in relation to (national) traditions of academic professions and to the new Bologna principles of the flexibility of learning paths and employability of graduates.

Along these lines, *Trends 4* could only re-establish that '[d]iscussions on both the duration and the purpose of programmes at Bachelor level continue. The misconception that the Bologna process "prescribes" in any way the 3+2 year structure is still widespread. 3+2 is indeed the dominant model across the European Higher Education Area, even in countries where HEIs have the choice between three and four years for the Bachelor level […]. In many universities professors and, to a lesser degree, deans and sometimes the institutional leadership, still express profound doubts regarding the possibility to offer a degree after only three years that is both academically valid and relevant to the labour market: "Employability" to these critics often seems to be synonymous to a lowering of academic standards. Reservations about the validity of three-year Bachelors are particularly strong in engineering, the physical sciences and fine arts' (Reichert, Tauch, 2005, p. 13).

Trends 4 did not include teacher education in this group. However, employability with a Bachelor degree in teacher education *is* a very hot issue in many countries as will be commented on later. Yet, uneasiness in relation to the (re-)composition of the new two-cycle study programmes and to employability is not only an institutional issue. Difficulties in reforming old curricula and transforming them into the new – 'Bologna' ones – depend very much on *system incentives* and/or *system obstacles*. *Trends 4* also stated that a 'very important impediment for a better acceptance of the Bachelor degrees is the failure of many governments to set a clear example of the value of Bachelor graduates with regard to public service employment, through adjusting civil service grades, and demonstrating positively the career and salary prospects of Bachelor graduates' (Reichert, Tauch, 2005, p. 14).

The last *Trends Report* – *Trends 5* – even sharpened its critical remarks with regard to implementation of the three-cycle structure. On one hand, it mentioned 'difficulties in institutional relationships with national authorities' and a 'lack of financial support to reform' (Crossier, Purser, Smidt, 2007, p. 20). However, there are also problems within the academic community: in some institutions 'the shift to a three-cycle

system seems to have taken place largely in isolation from a debate on the reasons for doing it. It was noteworthy that where negative views on implementation were expressed, these were almost always made by people who made no connection between structural reform and the development of student-centred learning as a new paradigm for higher education, and who did not perceive any strong necessity for the institution to re-think its role in society. Conversely, where attitudes were positive, they were nearly always connected to the view that reforms were enabling a better-suited, more flexible educational offer to be made by institutions to students' (Ibid, p. 21).

The reform of structures seems to be taking place in many cases in advance of the reform of substance and content, *Trends 5* concluded at this point. This is what should be in particular seriously considered from the point of view of the educational sciences – often linked with teacher education – at universities. 'While diversity in thinking and culture is a great strength of European higher education, diversity in understanding and implementation of structures is likely to prove an obstacle to an effective European Higher Education Area. It seems as difficult in 2007 as in 1999 to find evidence that the "European dimension" of higher education is becoming a tangible aspect of institutional reality. While the process may seem to be providing the same structural conditions for all, closer inspection reveals that some "little differences" may confuse the picture' (Ibid, p. 23).

The *Trends Reports* have, of course, a *general* focus: the issue is European higher education at large. Many findings can also be easily applied to individual disciplines and/or study areas but, from our point of view, it is now important to sharpen this focus with regard to *particular* issues of teacher education.

4 The position of teacher education within the ongoing higher education reforms

We will now analyse the position of teacher education in relation to the Bologna Process and the emerging EHEA in a relatively simple way: sharpening the focus on some key 'Bologna' categories, starting with the *European dimension*, continuing with *employability* and *structural issues* and concluding with *mobility*. Before doing so, we should again ask a few relatively general questions.

First of all: when we say *teacher education* – what do we actually mean? We know that teacher education is an old profession but a relatively young study field at universities; its university roots usually do not extend further back than the 1980s. Previously – and in some rare cases still today – teacher education was organised outside universities. Usually, nobody stressed teacher *education* but teacher *training*. Since the 1980s, arguments in favour of teacher education at universities or at least in other higher education institutions (yet, not excluding professional training) have multiplied, although today the term 'training' can still often be found *instead* of 'education' and not *parallel* to it. Is this terminological dispute at all important?

Yes, it is. If the teaching profession needs only 'some training' – even if it is higher training – there would be *no need for a recognised study field*.[13] It would suffice if higher education were to take place in a *subject discipline* – e.g. mathematics, language, arts etc. – and then some additional teacher *training* should be added on top. This 'cream on the coffee' could also be added outside higher education, e.g. in special inset courses organised e.g. by ministries of education. If this were the case, the teaching matter and education could not be an 'independent object' of higher education and research and there would be no need to enable teachers to continue their studies – i.e. *teacher education studies* – in the second and third cycles (Masters and PhD). They could only transfer from their initial education: either to a 'pure' subject discipline or to 'pure' education as such ('pedagogy' as in many continental countries in Europe).

There have been criticisms of such an understanding of teacher education since the 1980s. From today's point of view, the picture is relatively positive; it seems that teacher education has been accepted as a university study area even amongst the broad public outside of the strict circles of teachers of teachers. There have been ups and downs so far and several questions remain open and still cause confusion. Nevertheless, teacher education has undergone substantial reforms; it has entered the new millennium a little 'tired' – but 'upgraded'. Unfortunately, there is no time to rest; new reforms have been launched.

[13] The *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED; 1997) defines 'Teacher training and education science'; see http://www.uis.unesco.org/TEMPLATE/pdf/isced/ISCED_A.pdf. Yet, it is for statistical purposes only.

It can be stated that *the Bologna Process bring a new but serious challenge to teacher education at the present stage*. Is there enough strength within teacher education to proceed with the pace of development known from previous years? Are the concepts and ideas for further progress elaborated and clear? Which weaknesses could endanger the already achieved developmental level?

4.1 The European dimension

Around the world we have been witnessing deep and turbulent changes in education during the last 25 years. As basic education already became a standard for the whole population in the first half of the 20th century, upper-secondary education had become such a standard by the end of the 20th century. On the other hand, the growing internationalisation of higher education has had much in common with globalising economies. Despite clear international trends and some degree of international 'standardisation', as already discussed above, changes in education systems are still predominantly nationally-based. Even in the most 'internationalised' countries and globalised economies, school curricula remain nationally-based. The weight of the national context and the national culture seem to be the determinant with a specific 'excess' ('surplus') with regard to internationalisation and globalisation processes. During the Europeanisation processes, a lot has been said in favour of strengthening the European dimension; however, in public this term often sounds like mere words and not like a true value which politics is really concerned about. It is often put in the forefront that strengthening the European dimension could importantly contribute to 'soft' aims (if the economy is a 'hard' one), such as e.g. intercultural dialogue, social inclusiveness etc. A lot of work for teachers as well as for the teachers of teachers!

Not only education systems in general but particular *systems of teacher education* can be clear indicators of the ongoing 'national reservations'. Traditionally, 'national' teacher training colleges were – to a certain degree – more similar to police and military academies than 'universal' universities: teacher education and training was perceived as almost part of the 'national sovereignty'. With the changes of recent decades, this feature seems to be sinking into history but teacher education is encountering ever new challenges within the rough sea of modern education reforms. A teacher is still predominantly perceived as *a teacher within the national context* (e.g. language of instruction, culture,

traditions, history, identity, citizenship etc.), yet there is also an increasing need to position her/himself within the *European context* (e.g. mobility, languages, histories, multiculturalism, multiple identities and citizenship). This is not a specific feature of European education; all of this can also be applied to the global context. This challenge is sometimes understood as a *dilemma* and hinders faster development in the internationalisation of teacher education and teacher profession. Finally, teacher education is not a very common area in European 'flagship' projects; e.g. within Erasmus-Mundus it is practically a non-existent area etc.

With regard to the fast internationalisation of academic fields and professions (e.g. medicine, law, science, engineering, business and management etc.) teacher education (could) lag behind if more ambitious goals are not established.

4.2 Employability: discipline vs. profession

Employability is a relatively new concern for curriculum designers pressed by the Bologna reforms. It has frequently been stressed in fundamental policy documents, e.g.: the EHEA should be 'a key way to promote the citizens' mobility and employability and the Continent's overall development' (Bologna Declaration, 1999); measures should be taken 'so that students may achieve their full potential for European identity, citizenship and employability' (Berlin Communiqué, 2003) etc. But when we try to translate general strategic guidelines into a specific field concrete troubles always re-emerge.

On one hand, unclear definitions of teacher education disciplinary and/or professional fields bring about a conceptual problem: *what are the 'epistemological grounds' of teacher education*? We have already touched on this issue. Is teacher education integrated into (subjected to) respective 'subject disciplines'? If *yes*, there is no special teacher education disciplinary field; on the contrary, there are only fragmented disciplinary subject fields (language, mathematics etc.). Students get their higher education in a subject disciplinary field and – after that – some specific training, e.g. how to hold a piece of chalk and keep kids obedient. If *no*: does teacher education belong to 'pedagogy' (in continental traditions) as a 'subject-free' area? This option seems not much better than the previous one. Unfortunately, both have influenced discussions on teacher education in many European countries. The opposition between 'subject discipline' and 'pedagogy' is a kind of a

'necklace of tradition' which teacher education today has to remove off. This is one of the preconditions to approach the issue of employability and to make teaching a true *profession*.

Since its affiliation with university life, teacher education has been a prisoner of a conflict between a 'subject' and 'pedagogy'; a 'Conflict of Faculties' if we paraphrase Immanuel Kant's famous essay . However, there is rich evidence that this kind of opposition necessarily belongs to the past because 'scholars and scientists of one discipline can readily cross-fertilize colleagues in other. [… P]roblems increasingly transcend the competence of single disciplines or departments' (Hirsch, 2002, p. 2). This is not only the case in highly reputed fields such as medicine; it could also be applied in the case of teacher education. The strategic question is not 'who will take over premises and students of teacher education' (i.e. money) as it often is in university disputes, but rather the question of how to build studies and research in an *interdisciplinary* way.[14] This plea goes alongside some central 'Bologna' ideas on the flexibility and interdisciplinary character of academic study today.

Yet, the problem – at least in some national contexts – could be even more difficult. Not only do the 'epistemological grounds' of teacher education (discipline) still have to be built, but *teacher profession* in the strict sense has to be established and clearly recognised. On one hand, there is a generic comprehension of 'a teacher' in all languages: a skilled and qualified person who works with kids and students at a school. But when we say 'a teacher in the first grade of primary school', do we mean the same qualified person as in the case of 'a teacher in a gymnasium'? As a rule, this has not been the case so far. There are many different 'categories' of teachers and this hinders the clear identification of the teachers' profession. In medicine, a similar differentiation can be found between doctors and nurses, but not amongst doctors themselves.

Further, there are important formal *differences among teachers* in existing national systems: in salaries, responsibilities, social status and recognition and, last but not least, their degrees and types of teacher

[14] 'Therefore, researchers and students must become competent to engage in interdisciplinary undertakings if they are to meet societal and scientific challenges. […] In short, as challenges facing society become increasingly complex, multidimensional, and multi-faced, education must stimulate horizontal, thematic thinking and exploration. Emphasis on interdisciplinary curricula and research is thus in order' (Hirsch, 2002, pp. 2-3).

education institutions. Teachers' prestige usually depends on the position they take on the educational ladder; lower levels of education and VET 'don't count' much. A popular understanding – even within academia – is that 'a teacher for small kids' deserves less education and training (and a lower status) than 'a teacher for more adult kids'. (In comparison to medicine, this is again a fundamentally different approach: a gerontologist and a paediatrician are not treated in an opposite way.) Teachers in European countries are almost as a rule a *nationally regulated profession*; it seems to be easier if national (or regional) regulations simply absorb the prejudices of 'popular culture' than to *make new provisions, try to upgrade the teaching profession at all levels of the educational ladder and contribute to a homogenous teaching profession.*

Higher education institutions (in particular teacher education institutions) can contribute a lot towards achieving the latter option. Further reforms of teacher education should address this issue. Within this perspective, the hottest topic seems to be *the structure of teacher education curricula and the division of teacher education into the first, second and third Bologna cycles*.

4.3 Structural dimension of the Bologna Process and teacher education

In the *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* adopted by European Ministers in Bergen (2005) it is stated that first-cycle qualifications 'may typically include 180-240 ECTS credits' while second-cycle qualifications normally carry 90-120 ECTS credits, but 'the minimum requirement should amount to 60 ECTS credits at second cycle level' (Bologna Working Group, 2005, pp. 9 and 102). The Framework also made it clear that the issue should not be reduced to the abstract duration of study programmes but the focus should be given to *descriptors of learning outcomes*, including competencies, credits and workload, profile etc. Despite this warning, the popular 'Bologna jargon' used at higher education institutions formulates 'the principal question' as an arithmetic dilemma: 3+2 or 4+1?

This is a really simplified approach; an excuse could be that 'Bologna' brought headaches for many who are considering how to organise a two-cycle system in terms of study years and in relation to academic traditions. As have we already seen, the *Trends Reports* addressed this issue. *Trends 4* pointed out that the 'misconception that the Bologna

process "prescribes" in any way the 3+2 year structure is still widespread' (Reichert, Tauch, 2005, p. 13), while *Trends 5* was concerned that 'the process has sometimes been implemented rather superficially. Rather than thinking in terms of new educational paradigms and reconsidering curricula on the basis of learning outcomes, the first reflex has been to make a cut in the old long cycle and thus immediately create two cycles where previously one existed' (Crossier, Purser, Smidt, 2007, p. 24). So how do institutions decide about this problem in practice?

At the Centre for Education Policy Studies (CEPS; Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana) two similar surveys were performed in 2003 and 2006: a survey on trends in learning structures at teacher education institutions in 33 Bologna countries (Zgaga, 2003) and a survey on the prospects of teacher education in 12 Bologna countries of Central and South-east Europe (Zgaga, 2006). An interesting picture was constructed on the basis of responses to the question *what model of a two-cycle degree structure do individual institutions plan for the future?* It is true that the samples in both surveys are different but some general trends are easily perceived.

The survey painted a relatively surprising picture of trends in organisation of the two-cycle system. According to the 2003 survey, *institutions were completely divided into two blocks* when the formula 3+2 vs. 4+1 was in question: there were two distinct and totally equal majorities, both close to one-half of the respondents: 42.8% vs. 42.8% (Zgaga, 2003, p. 194). Interestingly, there were also almost *equal shares of responses centred around both main options* in the 2006 survey: 32.3% of institutions opted in favour of 4-year programmes in the first cycle (Bachelor) followed by 1 year in the second cycle (Master) while 30.6% of institutions opted in favour of 3 years in the first cycle (Bachelor) followed by 2 years in the second cycle (Master). A group representing 17.7% of institutions seems to remain undecided and a group of 14.5% of them plans to provide only the first cycle (Zgaga, 2006, p. 15). It could be concluded *that teacher education institutions have certain problems with the new two-cycle structure of study*. In the last few years this dilemma has only deepened.

Is this a special problem of teacher education? First, it is not a problem *only* in teacher education but it appears in some countries also in some other study areas (nevertheless, it seems it is a particularly sharpened problem in teacher education). Second, insofar as it is a special problem in teacher education, it relates to all of its main characteristics; teacher

education studies are more complex than most other studies in higher education. Let us check just three elements of this complexity.

The first one can be presented through the *interdisciplinary character of teacher education* as a university study area. As already argued, teacher education study programmes should combine in the best possible (interdisciplinary) way both 'subject' and 'pedagogy'. The problem is that there is no 'one subject', but almost all main disciplinary fields at universities could compete to be recognised as 'teacher education subjects'. As a result, there are often 'clashes among faculties': more cruel and pragmatic than in Kant's time, and faculties of teacher education as 'junior fellows' are often not such aggressive fighters. Academic 'politics' and the academic power balance can decisively determine how certain dilemmas – which in normal conditions should be treated as exclusively expert issues, e.g. redesigning curricula – are resolved in practice. On the other hand, this 'fight' is taking place under the hot 'Bologna' sun. Teacher education faculties are today again under pressure to argue their *raison d'être*.

Second, *initial vs. continuous teacher education* is a traditional differentiation within the teacher education concept. With the Bologna two-cycle structure this differentiation is seen under a new light. In most countries, initial teacher education was traditionally understood as *undergraduate study* and continuous education as *in-service training*. Now, is second-cycle teacher education initial *or* continuous education? In practice, the answer largely depends on *national regulations*. Traditionally, the first diploma was quite enough to obtain a licence to teach. Finland was the first country which decided – before 'Bologna' – to upgrade the initial teacher qualification to the second-cycle (Masters) level. Today, some countries are trying to follow it; but in the new circumstances the announced changes run parallel to fears that this will not necessarily contribute to the *quality* of teachers' qualifications. On one hand, there is a fear in some countries that qualifications for teaching at pre-school and primary school levels will 'only' require first-cycle degree and, in certain cases, the effect could be that study programmes are one year shorter. This introduces a double danger: to decrease existing standards and to (again) split primary and (upper-) secondary school teachers. *It is crucial for the future of teacher education systems in Europe which new national regulations governments approve will by 2010.*

Third, the *parallel vs. consecutive mode* is another characteristic feature of teacher education but not a characteristic feature of other higher education study areas. It seems that Bologna has not endangered this specific feature; on the contrary, it gives more opportunities for flexible learning paths (at least on paper) and it therefore could be a 'Bologna friendly' element. However, it poses some new questions and dilemmas. For example, a student gets a first-cycle degree (Bachelor) in Chemistry and then she/he would like to obtain a second-cycle (Master) degree in Teacher Education. Obviously, Master in Teacher Education should be based on the second-cycle level descriptors and not be understood as or substituted by *teacher training courses* (non-degree courses) which have traditionally in many countries compensated for a lack of pedagogic skills with those who graduated in a 'pure subject'.

There is another question at this point. What should the second cycle of Teacher Education aim at? Should it be about gaining a *teaching* licence (initial teacher education)? Or should it be about gaining a *research* degree? If this were true, then a transfer from a 'pure subject', e.g. first-cycle Chemistry to second-cycle Teacher Education would be difficult. In some study areas a differentiation between a shorter (60 credit ECTS) 'executive' or 'professional' degree and a longer (120 credit ECTS) 'research' degree is being made. Is the area of teacher education ready for this challenge? Is it adequately supported by university and/or national authorities?

Finally, *quality* is another key 'structural' concept broadly discussed within the Bologna Process, and we could start a long discussion here. Instead, let us just briefly mention that *there has been no transnational organisation, association or network in the area of quality assurance in teacher education so far*. There are cases of good practice in some national environments (e.g. Campos, 2004) and ENTEP also engaged in quality assurance issues at its September 2006 meeting. Finally, we also received an important document dealing with the quality of teacher education at the European level (Commission…, 2007) and it will be interesting to see how national authorities react to it.

However, in practice teacher education at the European and international level lags behind other fields of study such as medicine, engineering, economics and business etc. It is a strong trend today that specialised trans-national accreditation and/or quality agencies are established to act in the 'prominent' individual fields of studies – but

this is not the case in teacher education. The energy behind this trend is principally linked to issues of mobility, internationalisation, competitiveness, excellence and attractiveness in the global higher education arena. It seems that teacher education lacks this energy: it is still treated predominantly as 'national' and kept distant from internationalisation. This is a serious obstacle which hinders teacher education in not only improving its academic positioning and enhancing quality but also in playing an active role in international co-operation (in the broadest meaning of the term) and intercultural dialogue.

4.4 European and international mobility

Mobility is the key and central Bologna concept; therefore, it is important to ask *how mobile are students in teacher education today* and what can we expect and plan for tomorrow. Various statistical sources are available which can help to draw some pictures; however, analysts mainly agree that the methodology and data collection should be substantially improved if we really want clear pictures.

Mobility statistics usually refer to higher education at large; it creates an effect that all cows look black in the dark. To read mobility statistics across European countries from a concrete *study area point of view* it is important to know, first of all, what is the distribution of students and graduates by a specific area or field of study. As we can reconstruct from the available data, at the beginning of this decade (2000/01) there were on average 8.4% of students in the EU-15 who were studying in the (broader) area of education[15] (see *European Communities,* 2003, F.8a). With the enlargement process (EU-25 in 2004) this share has only increased: in the new member states, this share is as a rule higher than 10%, e.g. in Latvia 18% and in Slovak Republic 17%, while at the bottom of the list it is 11% in Slovenia and 10% in Estonia. On the other hand, the share of new teachers within the total body of new graduates in the EU-15 was a little higher: 10.0% (it seems that the drop-out rate in teacher education is lower than in higher education generally), while in most new member states it was again much higher. With regard to the

[15] There are several methodological difficulties with statistics at this point: the category 'education' as a rule comprises teacher education but in some cases other categories are also included. In any case, in absolute figures, students of 'pure' teacher education prevail in this group but other students in this group are also important for future building of the 'teaching profession'.

starting question, it can be estimated that *the average share of students in teacher education in today's EU-27 is somewhat over 10%*.

And what is *the share of international and mobile students in the area of teacher education*? According to recent OECD indicators (OECD, 2005a, Table C3.5), it is *less* than the average share of students in general. Within the EU-15, the highest share of *foreign students* in education is noted in Sweden (7.3%), followed by the Netherlands (5.7%) and Austria (5.3%). Among the new EU-10 countries (2004), the biggest share of foreign students in education is in Hungary (9.6%) and Poland (9.0%). Data also show that the share of foreign and/or mobile students of education and teacher education is proportionally lower than in most other study areas and/or disciplines.

An ACA study on student mobility in European higher education (Kelo, Teichler, Waechter, 2006) gives additional evidence to support such a conclusion. In the EU Socrates-Erasmus Programme (see ibid, p. 166, Table 10.4), there was a share of 3.9% of students from the 'education + teacher training' area in 1998/99, which went down to 3.4% in 2002/2003. There are only three study areas – out of a total of 16 areas – where a decrease was noted: languages + philology (a fall from 18.4% to 16.3%); law (a fall from 8.1% to 7.1%) and natural sciences (a fall from 4.4% to 3.9%). The picture is much worse with the Tempus programme: there were only 0.5% of mobile students in the area of 'education + teacher training' (ibid, p. 172, Table 10.11). *The position of teacher education in the two main EU mobility programmes – Erasmus and Tuning – is surprisingly weak and decreasing!*

To provide some additional checking, results from the Erasmus Student Network Survey of 2005 can also be used – although the results are similar: 'The most popular *major subjects* among the respondents were: business studies / management sciences (20%), engineering / technology (19%), languages and philological studies (11 %) and social sciences (8 %)'. Education and teacher education is almost at the end of the scale (2.2%), followed only by agricultural sciences (1.2%) and geography, geology (1.0%)[16] (Krzaklewska et al., 2006, p. 10, Figure 5).

A brief concluding comment is needed regarding these extremely revealing statistics: *today, in overall European student mobility teacher education is a relatively disregarded field of study*. This is a fact and it is not

[16] Here again, the survey used a different – more detailed in some areas – classification of study areas.

encouraging when we discuss the possible enhancement of the European – and global – dimension in teacher education.

An increase in mobile and foreign students in teacher education is necessary: not only to stay closer to other study areas and disciplinary fields but also to promote European and international mobility in education *in general* and to contribute to the 'soft' aims of (higher) education reforms. Teachers who have had an opportunity to experience the advantage of mobility already as students are much better prepared for their work with pupils and students in the context of European and international co-operation and intercultural dialogue; they approach multicultural issues in education easier etc.

5 Conclusion

We arrive now at the final point. Many contemporary teacher education institutions have achieved – or are striving for – an academic critical mass and a position within academic environments. Through their teaching and research, they could and should address not only questions of e.g. teaching, learning and assessment and not only questions of understanding 'teaching subject(s)' and/or educational phenomena, acting in schools and educational processes in general etc. Faculties of teacher education have also often played a constructive role in national education reforms as well as in bilateral and multilateral education co-operation. They could and should also play an active role in researching and teaching in this area as well as in designing *teacher education policies*. Predominantly, it is still regarded today that teacher education policies are an exclusive responsibility of national ministries of education. ENTEP has shown that ministerial representatives can do their work better in close co-operation with representatives of teacher education institutions. This practice should continue and be enhanced. It is also important to strengthen the European and global dimensions in education.

Since the 1980s, teacher education has been 'upgraded' (a process of the 'universityfication' of teacher education). The turbulent processes in a higher education at large and in the global context are bringing further challenges to teacher education as a specific area within higher education. Today, teacher education may be described:

- as a young 'academic discipline' and, therefore;

- as having a relatively lower 'critical mass' than traditional academic disciplines;
- as being at a higher level of political (governmental) influence than traditional professions;
- as more vulnerable with regard to 'national interests';
- at the beginning of a true internationalisation process; and
- as confronted by the challenge to contribute to the emerging knowledge society.

It can often be noticed in today's political discourses that 'the role of teachers is crucial' in national development as well as in international co-operation, intercultural understanding etc. If we take these statements seriously and try to make them a reality, the role of teacher education within higher education and in society at large should be significantly improved, in particular it is important:

- to 'tune' educational structures and approaches to teaching and learning at teacher education institutions in order to facilitate and increase the European and broader international mobility of students;
- to strengthen the European and broaden the international mobility of acting school teachers, including as an instrument of their continuous education and training;
- to bolster interdisciplinary research at teacher education institutions which provide teacher education and training;
- to enhance quality in the international context; and
- to enhance the position of teacher education within higher education at large.

In short: *teacher education institutions should start seriously considering their active participation in developing European national teacher education policy; for this reason, they should also consider developing in co-operation their own policy with regard to the questions discussed here.*

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***Note*:** the websites referred to in the footnotes were accessed in May and June 2008.

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Professionalism, Performativity and Care: Whither Teacher Education for a Gendered Profession in Europe?

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Introduction

This paper explores a number of discourses on teacher education, taking into account the highly feminised nature of teaching. It discusses changes that have happened in universities and some of their implications for teacher education. Finally, it refers to current European policy on teaching and teacher education and considers its implications both for the nature of teacher education and for what we define as quality. The paper is based on published research evidence from a number of countries in the European Union, from North America, Australia and New Zealand, and on research undertaken in Ireland.

A Highly Gendered Profession

Teaching is one of the most highly feminised professions in Western democracies. As the Commission of the European Communities (2007) points out, in all European Union countries except one, over 70% of teachers in primary education are women (in some countries it is considerably higher). The proportion of women teachers in lower secondary education is not as high as in primary education. While the proportion of women in upper secondary education is less striking, they outnumber men in nearly all countries. It is contended in this paper that discussions on policy in relation to teaching and teacher education must take that into account. Before discussing policy, let us now consider a number of the dominant discourses on teaching that are to be found in the research literature.

Dominant Discourses on Teaching

There are a number of different discourses on teaching. Though not attempting to be exhaustive, these are classified here into a discourse of domesticity; a discourse of femininity; a discourse of care; a discourse of performativity and 'new managerialism'; and, a discourse of professionalism itself. The first of these is a discourse which is firmly rooted in an ideological link between women's domestic roles and their commitment to teaching (Drudy et al., 2005).

Discourse of domesticity

'Domestic ideology' proposes that women are 'naturally' more disposed towards nurture than are men. This is particularly reflected in the perceived association between the nurturing role of women and their assumed greater suitability for teaching very young children (Byrne, 1978; Gaskell, 1992). The domestic ideology which provides cultural support for the notion that women's careers should be compatible with homemaking responsibilities has weakened somewhat over the last couple of decades in many countries. Nevertheless, there is still strong evidence of cultural perceptions in a number of countries that women are more suited than men for primary teaching. It was evident in a number of ways in the findings of a study of gender and teaching in Ireland (Drudy et al., 2005) in the perception of school students and, to a lesser extent, of student teachers, that women were best suited to the career of primary teaching. In the same study a form of domestic ideology was evident in the views of some guidance counsellors interviewed in the study that women made better primary teachers because of their caring qualities. No such ideology exists to provide a connection between men's careers and homemaking/parental responsibilities. Indeed, both student teachers and school students surveyed in this study gave, in very similar proportions, as by far their most frequent explanation for the low proportion of men in primary teaching the perception that it is a woman's job (ibid.).

Discourse of femininity

Discourses of femininity have been linked to the discourse of domestic ideology. For example, discourses in teacher education departments have come under scrutiny in a number of countries. The examination and critique of symbolic notions of female domesticity and service, and their link to teacher professional identities and to accounts of

contemporary working life as described by women teacher educators, suggest that despite women's attempts to shift public understanding of gender in the workplace they often read their *own* working lives through images of female domesticity (Dillabough, 1999; 2005). Discourses of femininity have also been found in primary teacher education programmes (Oyler et al., 2001; Cammack and Phillips, 2002). In fact, research among women teachers has suggested that they themselves reproduce, rather than change, traditional gender patterns (Gannerud, 2001).

Discourse of care

Aligned with the discourses of domesticity and femininity is the discourse of care. It is argued here that the concept of care is as central to any discussion of competencies in teaching as are technical competencies, and that an ethic of care is also central to human, social and economic development generally. It is increasingly acknowledged by scholars and researchers working in the field of care and social cohesion that care as an activity is both vital and fundamental to human development and well-being, social solidarity, and to economic development. If we take the notion of the different forms of 'capital' developed by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, we may define the outcomes of care work as 'nurturing' capital (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Lynch, 2007). There is now a substantial body of scholarship and theory on the concept of care. Gilligan (1995) distinguishes between a feminine and a feminist ethic of care. Care as a feminine ethic is an ethic of special obligations and interpersonal relationships. A feminist ethic of care begins with the notion of *connection* – theorised as primary and seen as fundamental in life (ibid: 122). The concept of care is linked to the concept of justice. While an ethic of justice proceeds from the premise of equality – that everyone should be treated the same, or that similar outcomes should be facilitated through respect for diversity and compensatory measures where necessary – an ethic of care rests on the premise of non-violence – that no one should be hurt (Gilligan, 1982: 174). Noddings (2003) makes a distinction between 'caring-for' and 'caring-about'. Caring-for is the direct face-to-face attempt to respond to the needs of someone being cared for and is fundamentally relational. 'Caring-about' is characterised by some distance in the relationship and relates to the public realm (ibid.: xv). We need to value care as an aspect of social relations essential to general social well-being. To do this requires policies and practices based in a wholehearted acceptance of an

ethic of care, alongside a commitment to social justice (Barnes, 2006: 143).

Lynch (2007) has developed a three-fold taxonomy of care that distinguishes between the work involved in sustaining love, care and solidarity relations. First, there is the world of primary, intimate relations where there is strong attachment, interdependence, depth of engagement and intensity; the prototypical relationship here is that between parents and children. Secondary care relations involve outer circles of relatives, friends, neighbours and work colleagues where there are lower order engagements in terms of time, responsibility, commitment and emotional engagement. Tertiary care relations involve largely unknown others for whom we have care responsibilities through statutory obligations at national or international levels, or for whom we care politically or economically through volunteering (ibid.: 555-556). Using Lynch's taxonomy, we can see that the relationships involved in teaching intersect to a greater or lesser degree (depending on the sector and the age of the students) at each of the levels of care.

Analyses of teacher-student relations have identified the affective domain, or caring about children, as fundamental to teachers' professional identity (Barber, 2002). This is a particularly strong discourse in relation to primary teaching. It has also been identified at second level and is especially influenced by teachers' perceptions of students' social class backgrounds (ibid.). In Ireland the notion of an ethic of care is, for example, embedded within the Codes of Professional Conduct of the newly established Teaching Council, following an extensive consultative process among professionals and stakeholders:

> As well as the legal duty of care which teachers exercise, their role as carers is central to their professional value system (Teaching Council, 2007).

Research in a number of countries shows that caring is seen as an integral part of teaching, but that it is understood in many different ways by teachers – caring as commitment, caring as relatedness, caring as physical care, caring as expressing affection, caring as parenting and caring as mothering (Vogt, 2002). The concept of an ethic of care can be articulated either as a moral perspective (which has been found to be more often held by women) or an ethic of care understood as

responsibility for and relatedness to their pupils (which has emerged amongst men as well as women – ibid.).

An orientation to social justice is frequently related to an orientation towards care. This was evident in a study of women in the United States who chose teaching (Smulyan, 2004a and 2004b). This orientation towards care is sometimes defined as an 'altruistic' orientation in which there is an emphasis on care and on 'making a difference'. It is evident among entrants to the profession as well as among established teachers. Research in Ireland has demonstrated this (Drudy et al., 2005). For example, in our study of more than 1,000 school students and over 450 primary student teachers their orientations towards careers and work were explored. In comparison to the school students (of whom twelve per cent hoped to go into teaching), both male and female student teachers were more strongly (and statistically significantly) oriented to caring or altruistic values than were second-level pupils. This was particularly marked in the case of the female student teachers. This stronger orientation towards caring or altruistic values among the student teachers confirmed the linkages between caring and primary teaching. The data in this study also suggested that males studying to be primary teachers were most markedly different from other males in relation to their attitudes to caring/altruistic values. Indeed, males going into primary teaching were much less oriented to factors like pay and prestige, and much more oriented to caring and towards others than were males in general (ibid.). It is evident then that research has identified that there are discourses of femininity and domesticity in teaching, and has identified that an ethic of care is part of a more generalised discourse of care in teaching, shared by both men and women (Mills and Satterthwait, 2002; Barber, 2002, Vogt, 2002, Drudy et al., 2005; Teaching Council, 2007). It is important to emphasise that an ethic of care is by no means a value that is, or should be, confined to women. For historical and cultural reasons women have more frequently espoused this value and have been more involved with care work. Therefore, an ethic of care is a value which women have very particularly contributed to teaching, and to the world, and there is plenty of evidence for this from many countries. An ethic of care should be an integral element of quality in teaching and in teacher education. Research in England has suggested that there is a need for the emotional and caring work that teachers invest in their daily role to be incorporated into definitions of good teaching throughout the

standards-agenda mechanisms, including assessments and inspections (Hebson, Earnshaw and Marchington, 2007).

Discourse of performativity and 'new managerialism'

There is, however, another emergent discourse (very identifiable in policy documents). That is the discourse of performativity. The term 'performativity' is particularly associated with the work of the English sociologist, Stephen Ball, and he defines it as follows:

> Performativity, it is argued, is a new mode of state regulation which makes it possible to govern in an 'advanced liberal' way. It requires individual practitioners to organize themselves as a response to targets, indicators and evaluations; to set aside personal beliefs and commitments and live an existence of calculation. The new performative worker is a promiscuous self, an enterprising self, with a passion for excellence. For some, this is an opportunity to make a success of themselves, for others it portends inner conflicts, inauthenticity and resistance. (Ball, 2003: 215)

In a number of countries the performativity discourse has been particularly strongly driven by government policy. This has centred around discussions of school improvement, target setting and the re-organisation of teaching (Arnot and Miles, 2005).

This form of discourse has become known, especially when it is applied to higher education, as the 'new managerialism'. 'New managerialism', also referred to as 'neo-liberalism', requires the constant production of evidence that you are doing things efficiently and in the 'correct' way. This gives rise to what has been called an 'audit' culture (Apple, 2005). It is characterised by the removal of the locus of power from the knowledge of practicing professionals to auditors, policy-makers and statisticians – none of whom need necessarily know anything about the profession in question (Davies, 2003). Surveillance is a key element of neo-liberal systems (Davies, 2005). In fact, of course, aspects of the new managerialism are not so very new. Some of the concepts underlying it go back a very long way, in Ireland for example, there was 'payment by results' in the 19th century (Coolahan, 1981, p. 27).

The dangers of standard setting by governments and of increased managerial and performative pressures have recently become a focus of research (Ranson, 2003). These dangers have been found to include the strengthening of corporate differentiation and increasing private ownership of educational services and infrastructures, combined with a certain amount of 'game-playing' or 'cynical compliance' on the part of teachers (Taylor Webb, 2006; Ball, 2003). In more performative systems teaching becomes less authentic (Taylor Webb, 2006), teachers 'play the game' and even (as observed in research in the United States) engage in professional 'fabrications' of performative activities (ibid.). Aside from overshadowing the caring side of the professional work of teaching (Forrester, 2005), performative pressures have been found to represent a considerable loss of pedagogical autonomy for teachers (Thrupp, 2006).

Discourse of professionalism

The performativity discourse on teaching is at odds with the other discourses of domesticity, femininity and caring. Professionalism and performativity are strongly associated in key policy documents such as the OECD's *Teachers Matter* (to which we shall return). There are, however, many definitions of the term 'profession' and of the concept of 'professionalism'. For the purposes of this paper, a working definition of professionalism in the context of teaching will be established based on the work of the Australian educator, Judyth Sachs.

Sachs provides a useful way to consider the concept of professionalism in contemporary contexts (Sachs, 2001 – also see Kennedy 2007). She identifies two discourses in relation to professionalism – a democratic and a managerial one. Managerialist professionalism is being reinforced by employing authorities through their policies on teacher professional development with an emphasis on accountability and effectiveness. Managerial professionalism has been the more dominant of the two discourses according to Sachs.

As indicated earlier, managerialism has been associated by many analysts with neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism argues that free markets, unfettered by government regulation, will solve social, economic, and political problems and that government regulation exacerbates or even causes problems, such as schools' failure to educate some children (Weiner, 2007). Work in New Zealand, for example, has suggested that

neo-liberalism has changed the context and purposes of public education and argues that economic rationalism and managerialism, combined with commercialisation and globalisation, have produced an erosion of trust and a degradation of teaching as a profession (Codd 2005). Managerialism involves re-organising the public sector along the lines of 'best' commercial practice (Mahony, Hextall, and Menter 2004) and performance management systems have recently been introduced in schools in some countries. The evidence on the impact of these new systems in primary and secondary schools suggests that it is one of 'masculinising' school cultures (making school cultures more masculine) – that performance management systems construct cultures that are at odds with professional cultures of teaching and are particularly hostile to women (ibid.).

Democratic professionalism emerges from the profession itself. The democratic perspective argues that professionalism cannot survive on performance indicators alone (Stronach et al., 2002). It has to rely, in the end, on positive trust rather than be driven by performance ranking (ibid.). According to Sachs (2001), the core of democratic professionalism is an emphasis on collaborative, cooperative action between teachers and other educational stakeholders. Arguably, democratic professionalism, and especially an emphasis on care, is more compatible with professional cultures of teaching that are hospitable to women.

The Context of Teacher Education: Universities and Performativity Cultures

Teacher education is now mainly located within universities (especially for second level teaching) or in colleges of education associated with universities. Teaching is the largest single employer of graduate labour in OECD countries (OECD, 2005, p. 23). Therefore, in order to fully understand developments in teacher education it is necessary to consider the contexts in which so much of it takes place, in particular the growth in universities of audit and performativity cultures. Expectations and policies that universities should play a crucial part in economic development and competitiveness, together with the declining state subvention to university budgets in many countries, has given rise to the development of corporate cultures in universities (Drudy, 2006). An

'entrepreneurial' university system is now seen as being central to national competitiveness. Higher education institutions are, of course, increasingly complex places financially and organisationally and good management skills are necessary (Apple, 2005). However, research in several countries points to the fact that the character of universities has changed significantly as a result (Apple, 2006). For example, there is a decline in what is regarded as 'collegiality' as universities move away from models of decision-making broadly perceived as collegial and democratic towards the empowering of senior executive management elites within the central university administrations (Deem, 2003; Collier, 2005).

These changes have implications for gender equity within higher education institutions (Blackmore, 2005). The growth of academic capitalism, performativity and managerialism, and the development of audit cultures in higher education, are evident in many countries (Ball, 2001; Harris, 2005; Ylijoki, 2005). There are, of course, a number of positive advantages of many of these developments from the point of view of states. These include declining state subventions to universities, increased productivity in research, the massification of higher education systems and the goal of increasing competitiveness.

On the other hand, international research has recently identified problems in the internal management of universities associated with increased managerialism and performativity. For example, teacher education departments tend to be more highly staffed by women than many other university departments. Evidence from countries such as Australia and Canada indicates that new managerialism (in response to public policy, budget cutting and so on) has given rise to greater workloads, less flexibility and a more 'macho' kind of academic (Davies, 2003) with consequent strains on women who occupy dual roles in the academy and the family (Thomas and Davies, 2002; Acker and Armenti, 2004; Armenti, 2004).

Some evidence is emerging from a number of countries on the negative impact of university changes and re-structuring on the health and welfare of academic staff. Major studies in Australia, Canada and the UK have found that the impact of the changes experienced in many universities has given rise to stress levels among academics which are

measurably higher than the norms for the general population (Winefield et al., 2003; Armenti, 2004; Tytherleigh et al., 2005).

The university changes mentioned above have particular resonances in primary teacher education, where the ethic of care is strong. An English study of female primary teacher educators (Murray 2006) illustrated that the gender politics of their situation also operated to undermine the key tenets of their professionalism. The devaluation of their often 'hidden' and feminised professional work was a double bind for them since the (re)production of the affective practices in primary education, and the discourses about primary school teaching and primary initial teacher education that go with them, are at the heart of their professionalism (ibid.). It is also argued that the performativity discourse is hindering not only the caring discourse in teacher education but also the creativity discourse (Turner-Bisset, 2007).

Teacher Education in Changing Environments

Teacher education is the critical link between the university and society. It is argued here that universities must play a strong role in the deepening of democracy, the fostering of social justice and the public good. Further, it is argued that teacher education, the educational sciences and educational research are very important elements of this contribution. Teachers are the only professional group who play a central role in the daily lives of the entire population in Western democracies, irrespective of class, creed or ethnic background. Teacher education plays a critical part in the formation of these professionals and in the setting of professional standards. Teacher education is one sense a form of political activity – with a small 'p' of course. It must prepare teachers in ways that enhance their own capabilities for cultural communication, democratic negotiation and global awareness, as well as prepare them in the curricular knowledge and technical expertise required to enhance the knowledge of their pupils (Bates, 2004 and 2005).

The importance of higher education institutions in initial and continuing teacher education is clearly set out in the communication of the Commission of the European Communities to the European Parliament

in August 2007. The notion that universities have a key role to play not only in the pre-service and in-career education of teachers but in enhancing professionalism is not confined to Europe. In Australia, it has been argued that successful teacher education for the 21st century demands full professionalisation through university-based programmes that incorporate the contextual advantages of school-based teacher education without the reproductive disadvantages of apprenticeship models (Lovat and McLeod 2006). Highly politicised debates on professionalism in teaching in the United States have also focused on teacher education – particularly around concerns about policy pressures to 'deregulate' the profession (i.e. to encourage untrained individuals to work as teachers in schools) and have led to an emphasis by many teacher educators on the importance of university education in the maintenance of professionalism (Cochran-Smith 2006; Darling-Hammond 2000a and 2000b, 2006a and 2006b; Schalock, Schalock and Ayres 2006; Zeichner 2006).

Some evidence of the way in which the policy agenda can be influenced by research and development is offered by the results of a multi-million euro, multi-institutional research programme in the UK, the Teaching and Learning Research Programme (the TLRP – http://www.tlrp.org). The outcomes of this very large project in terms of policy impact are positive. The principles and skills emerging from the project for professionals in the field illustrate to a significant degree a model of a caring professionalism (Hofkins, 2007) although an ethic of care is implicit rather than explicit throughout the TLRP.

Although teaching is now an all-graduate profession in developed countries, and although the entry point to the profession is at masters level in a number of countries, there have been suggestions emerging from some countries that, in the future, universities will cease to have a direct involvement with the education of student teachers, although university education departments might continue to provide guidance and consultancy services (Williams, 2005, p. 334). There is also the emergence of online provision by private providers. If a drift of teacher education out of the universities (and colleges of education affiliated to universities) in Europe were to become a general pattern it would pose considerable risks to the status of the profession. As teaching is such an important career for graduate women this would have serious implications for gender equality. The international pattern in

universities is, as we have seen, one of increasing managerialism and performativity (sometimes described as a masculinising agenda). Teaching and teacher education are highly feminised and, like nursing, are more likely to be relatively disadvantaged in relation to other longer established university based professions such as medicine within the academy (Meerabeau, 2006). In spite of this, universities are still largely autonomous in most countries and offer greater space to develop reflective and critical practitioners (Smulyan, 2004a) rather than ones more narrowly focused on performativity (Williams, 2005). Rather than permitting a drift of teacher education out of universities (even with all the problems of re-structuring and change), a more productive way forward is to harvest the enormous potential of research-based and problem-centred teacher education.

International Policy on Teaching and Teacher Education

The Lisbon (2000), Bologna (1999) and Bergen (2005) agreements all have serious implications for teacher education. The link between the economic and democratic projects of the EU and teaching is most clearly established at a European level by the work of the Education and Culture section of the European Commission in the development of Common European Principles for Teacher Competencies and Qualifications (2005) and in the statement of the Commission of the European Community to the European Parliament on improving the quality of teacher education (2007). These documents envisage that teaching should be a high status, high reward, well-qualified profession in which every teacher should have the opportunity to continue their studies to the highest level. Teachers, they argue, should be lifelong learners and be able to understand the factors that create social cohesion and exclusion in society and be aware of the ethical dimensions of the knowledge society and teacher education should be an object of research. All of this would suggest a form of teacher education which is reflective, analytical and critical and would be on a par with advanced studies in any of the professions. The analytical, research-based work of teacher educators, would, it is envisaged, be conducted in partnership and collaboration with schools and other stakeholders.

The final policy document to be examined here is the OECD's (2005) *Teachers Matter*. This is a study of teacher policy conducted by the OECD

in collaboration with 25 of its member countries. The underlying philosophy is one of economic competitiveness and efficiency, although the emphasis is on high quality in teaching. From one perspective (i.e. the recognition by policy-makers at a high level of the importance of teaching and of teacher education to national economies and social development) this report supplies much valuable data and has the potential to enhance the status of teaching. There is an evident, genuine concern to attract and retain high quality people in the profession. From another perspective there are some risks. The language of *Teachers Matter* is substantially that of performativity, performance indicators, standards, evaluation and appraisal. As regards gender, the *Teachers Matter* reports the 'concern' in many countries that the proportion of males is declining in the profession, concerns based on the supposed benefits of male role models for disengaged boys and the possibility that a decline in male teacher numbers signals teaching's more general loss of appeal as a career (p. 59). The assumptions underlying the male role model thesis are unchallenged in the report, as are those that male recruitment rates define the level of 'appeal' of a profession.

Conclusions

Teaching is a highly feminised profession throughout Europe. Discourses on teaching are increasingly drawn from the perspective of performativity. There is a disjuncture between the performativity discourse and other discourses integral to the profession. Most teacher education currently takes place within university environments, themselves imbued with cultures of performativity and audit cultures. However, retaining teacher education within universities and colleges affiliated to universities is the most important measure to maintain and enhance the professional status of teaching. There are distinct possibilities for teachers and teacher educators to align their own professional agendas with the importance given to teaching in the development of the knowledge society and the knowledge economy evident in influential international policy documents. However, such an alignment should only be pursued if informed by a high level of critical awareness that important dimensions of teaching, integral to the profession, are either omitted or ignored by these documents. For example, given that care and an orientation towards social justice are so important within the professional codes and traditions of teaching, so

much a dimension of feminine discourses on teaching, and are so central to motivations to teach, it is significant that the terms 'care', 'caring' or 'an ethic of care' do not appear, even once, in any of the six major European policy documents examined here. Research which is close to the concerns of professionals illustrates that the forms of professionalism that actually 'work' in terms of improved outcomes incorporate principles and practices which could reasonably be classified as an ethic of care and should be built into high quality teacher education programmes. As Earley, quoted in Cochran-Smith (2001) puts it - 'a market policy lens is based on competition, choice, winners and losers, and finding culprits. Yet teachers must assume that all children can learn, so there cannot be winners and losers'.

European policy documents in recent years have quite rightly focused on a range of subject-specific and generic competencies in relation to teaching and teacher education. A teacher must be knowledgeable in his or her subject field in order to be inclusive and caring (Noddings, 2007: 197). He or she must also be skilled in the management of learning. It is not in any sense suggested here that the principles, skills and qualifications identified set out by the Commission of the European Communities (2007) Communication to the European Parliament are anything other than very valuable. However, a central argument of this paper is that European policy on teacher education must put an ethic of care and of social justice and solidarity at the centre of teacher education policy in order to build on discourses and orientations which are integral to the profession and to contribute to the deepening of democracy and the public good.

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The Significance of the European Commission's Policy Paper 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education': Perspectives of Estonian Teachers, Teacher Educators and Policy-makers

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The Need to Improve the Quality of Teacher Education

The Commission of the European Communities recently prepared a policy paper called 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education' for the European Parliament. This policy paper was launched for public discussion in August 2007 and approved 26 October 2007. The paper introduces the challenges facing teacher education in the European context, relates teacher education policy to other relevant policies of the Union, summarises the changing demands of the teaching profession and outlines a framework for action. Our question here is how teaching professionals themselves are experiencing the challenges and opportunities outlined in the Commission's paper, and how the paper, in their experience, suits the Estonian context.

The following is an introduction to the Commission's paper, which is the result of a process that began with the Lisbon agenda for growth and jobs in March 2000. The Commission paper summarises the changing demands on the teaching profession. According to the paper, teachers are increasingly needed to help young people develop into autonomous learners by acquiring the skills needed by society rather than just memorising information. In light of what we know from research about learning, teachers are expected to develop their pedagogical approaches to include more co-operative and activating methods instead of transmission of knowledge to passive recipients. The fact that groups are larger and more heterogeneous, displaying a variety of abilities, requires the teachers to facilitate the learning of mixed groups as well as the learning of individual learners. At the same time the teacher is part of the school community, working with other teachers, the pupils' parents,

organisations, etc. The paper goes on to state that initial teacher education is not sufficient to equip teachers with all the skills that they will need during their professional teaching career. It sees teachers' commitment to reflective practice, a research base, and continuous professional development as vital in how well they are able to meet the demands of the profession.

Many European countries struggle with providing teachers with the opportunity to update their skills and knowledge (OECD, 2005). The lack of opportunities is particularly related to updating teachers' competence in pedagogy, including support to individualised learning, facilitating autonomous, self-regulated learning, dealing with the diverse needs of pupils in heterogeneous classrooms, and facilitating learners' development of information technology skills. The lack of co-ordination between initial and continuing teacher education does not make the situation any easier in many European countries. Investment in continuous training and development is fairly low across Europe, and the provision of support for new teachers is limited (ibid.)

Further, the Commission's paper mentions as challenges remuneration and the age structure in the teaching profession. Labour market conditions and teachers' salaries in relation to average national income affect the competitiveness of the profession in the job market. Teachers' salaries may not be competitive compared to those offered in other organisations. There will be a substantial demand for recruiting and retaining a sufficient workforce in the teaching profession when large cohorts retire.

Our interest in analysing teaching professionals' views about education policy documents springs from the assumption that policy documents should be seen as a *dialogue* between rhetoric and action. Policy documents are often thought of as mere rhetoric without a close relationship to political action (Saarinen, 2007). At the same time, policy documents may be regarded as descriptions of existing political reality. Both ways of viewing policy documents in the educational context, either as rhetoric or as descriptions of reality, are inadequate (ibid.). With this study we would like to facilitate the dialogue between teacher education policy-makers who outline national agendas and the teachers who in their daily work implement the policies.

Common Principles for Developing Teacher Education and Steps to Be Taken

'The Common European Principles for Teacher Competencies and Qualifications' (2005) outlines a vision of a European teaching profession. Teaching is envisioned as a profession of *well-qualified* people, in which all teachers hold a higher education degree and possess suitable pedagogical knowledge and cultural understanding. Teachers are seen as *lifelong learners* who continue their professional development throughout their careers. Teaching is *a mobile* profession in which teachers work and study in other European countries to enhance their professional development. *Partnerships* among teacher education institutions, schools, local work environments, work-based training providers and other stakeholders form a supportive network for teachers and their work communities.

Based on these common principles, the Commission's paper outlines a set of steps to be undertaken in order to improve the quality of teacher education in Europe. These steps include lifelong learning, skills development, reflective practice and research, development of qualifications, development of teacher education as a higher education degree, and emphasising the teacher's role in the society. In facilitating dialogue between educational policy and individual teachers, the most interesting aspects for the purposes of our paper are the steps of lifelong learning and reflective practice and research. The theoretical justifications for emphasising these two aspects – lifelong learning, and reflection and research – can be found in a body of literature on adult learning and teacher development.

Lifelong Learning

Teachers' professional development has been approached through different theoretical perspectives, including developmental stage theories (Furlong & Maynard, 1995; Kagan, 1992), socialisation theory (Zeichner & Gore, 1990), cognitive and personality theory (Calderhead, 1988), and workplace learning (cf. Mezirow, 1991). The Commission's paper takes as its point of departure the fact that initial education cannot provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for their entire teaching career. Developing as a teacher is a lifelong task, and it is best

supported when teacher education and continuing development are properly funded, and nationally co-ordinated as a coherent and continuous system. In practice, this means that teachers
'take part in an effective programme of induction during their first three years in post / in the profession; have access to structured guidance and mentoring by experienced teachers or other relevant professionals throughout their career; take part in regular discussions of their training and development needs, in the context of the wider development plan of the institution where they work' ('Improving the Quality of Teacher Education', 2007, 13.).

Further, teachers would benefit from:

- encouragement and support throughout their careers in developing their competencies through formal, informal and non-formal means and the recognition of these as valid means of development;
- having access to other opportunities for continuous professional development, such as exchanges and placements;
- having the opportunity and time for further qualifying studies and taking part in study and research at a higher education level; and
- participating in creative partnerships between different institutions, including higher education institutions (ibid.)

Reflective practice and research

By reflection we understand the meaning-making process of experiences as a way for the teacher to recognise his or her learning, analyse it, and share the understanding with their peers (Colton & Sparks-Langer, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Wang & Odell, 2002). The aim of reflection is not only the identification of problems or weaknesses, but also the improvement and development of practice. The understandings created based on experiences should be transferable or applicable to practice. Thus, reflection is also a means for deepening the understanding of one's thinking and behaviour. A constant dialogue between one's previous and current experiences is necessary in order to analyse the underpinnings of one's behaviour and thinking (McAlpine, 1993; McAlpine & Weston, 2000). Practical, cognitive and meta-cognitive skills need to be integrated. The teacher's work, as a continuous knowledge-

building process, should be anchored in ontological and epistemological assumptions acknowledged by the teacher (Pickle, 1985).

On reflective practice and research the Commission's paper takes as its point of departure the teachers' role in helping 'young people to take responsibility for mapping out their own learning pathways throughout life' ('Improving . . .', 2007, 14.). The teacher's work is ethical by nature and as such requires reflection (Pickle, 1985). To meet the expectations of this role teachers need an awareness of their own learning pathways. Teachers are also expected to be developers of their professions, indicating that they have a responsibility to develop the knowledge base in the field. In the context of lifelong learning, the teachers' professional development implies continuous reflection on practice; undertaking classroom-based research and incorporating the results of classroom and academic research into their practice; evaluating the effectiveness of teaching; and assessing their own training needs ('Improving …', 2007).

Teacher Education in Estonia

Teacher education is provided in the form of degree studies regulated by the 'Framework Guidelines for Teacher Education' (2000). The framework guidelines set out general and special requirements for teacher education, induction year, and in-service training. Teacher education for all school levels consists of three parts: (1) general studies; (2) speciality studies; and (3) pedagogical studies including educational science, psychological and didactic studies, and practical training. The general studies focus on the development of the teacher's overall cultural, communicative, and social competencies, whereas speciality studies provide subject-related knowledge and skills based on current requirements for the profession. An important aspect is also to provide the skills for combining this knowledge with an understanding of the human being, the surrounding environment and society. The general studies in educational science, psychological, didactic studies and practical training aim at developing didactic mastery of the subject, provide skills for applying psychological knowledge, and provide knowledge and skills of organisation, classroom and group management, and team work skills.

The development of teacher education practices and support systems for teachers' professional development in Estonia have emerged from challenges such as the perceived low prestige of the teaching profession and high average age of teachers, resulting in retirement. Currently there are 16,500 teachers in Estonian comprehensive and vocational schools and pre-school institutions. Since 1993, the level of formal education among Estonian teachers, in numbers of teachers with a degree from a higher education institution, has increased in comprehensive schools and vocational institutions. 75-80% of comprehensive school teachers now have a degree in education. The percentage of over 50-year-old teachers has increased drastically. Their percentage to the total number of teachers has grown from 23% to 35% (Õpetajakoolituse … 2006.). 11% of teachers working at comprehensive schools are under 30 years of age. Although this figure is similar to that in, for example, Finland (7.6% of teachers are under 30), there are difficulties in motivating and recruiting prospective teachers in Estonia. Portugal and Great Britain, for example, have managed well with the recruitment of prospective teachers. In these countries the percentage of teachers representing younger generations is as high as 18-24 (ibid.). The foreseen mass retirement of teachers is likely to affect Estonia.

Method

Aim and Research Question

The aim of the study was to analyse Estonian teaching professionals' views of the European policy paper 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education'. This document emphasises teachers' lifelong learning, reflective practice and research (among other things). The central question was: What relevance do these concepts as presented in the policy paper have for educational practitioners? This paper describes a study based on written and focus-group interviews with teachers, teacher educators and policy-makers.

Participants

The participants consisted of two groups. The first group involved teachers (N = 4) who, after reading the EU policy paper, shared with the researchers in writing their reactions to the document. These four were a

primary school student teacher in her fifth year of study, a subject teacher with seven years of teaching experience, a teacher with ten years of teaching experience, and a former primary school teacher with twenty years of teaching experience who now works as a teacher educator. Because of her extensive experience of teaching this participant was placed in the group of practising teachers. The data were collected in October 2007. The second group of participants consisted of teacher educators and policy-makers on the state level (N = 5) who provided their reactions to the European policy paper in a focus-group interview in January 2008.

Data

The study utilises thematic written and oral interviews. The data were content analysed (cf. Marshall & Rossman, 1995) and responses were divided into thematic blocks describing the meanings given to the policy paper. Content analysis is a suitable data analysis method for data elicited in focus groups (Parker & Tritter, 2006).

Focus groups are generally used in order to collect a range of views and experiences of a given situation or context. Participants are chosen on the basis that they have something in common, in which the researcher is interested (Parker & Tritter, 2006). This commonality is the 'focus' of the group's get together. The researcher's role is to function as a facilitator of the discussion within the group, not to hold discussions between him or herself and the group members (ibid.). Thus the interaction in the interviews with the practising teachers was different from that in the focus group interview. The practising teachers provided answers to the researcher's questions, whereas the focus group participants engaged in a discussion among themselves. Yet group dynamics and interaction, which are often emphasised in focus groups, did not play a role in our research. The focus was the European policy document in the Estonian context, not the interaction patterns or discourse used in the group. The different methods for eliciting data in this study may have impacted on the nature of the data. It is possible that a focus group interview with the practising teachers might have provided different information to the researchers. For instance, the synergy described by Kitzinger (1994 in Parker & Tritter, 2006) was not possible in the practising teachers' individual interviews. In order to

overcome potential pitfalls, the data elicited by the two methods are analysed separately.

The policy documents relevant to the study are:

- 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education' by the Commission of the European Communities (2007);
- 'Estonian Teachers' Standard' (Õpetaja, 2005); and
- 'The Estonian Framework Guidelines for Teacher Education' (2000), which describe general and special requirements for teacher education in Estonia.

Results and Reflections

Practising Teachers

In the data collected from practising teachers (including one student teacher) the following themes emerged: opportunities (mobility) and threats (low salary, time constraints) to developing the profession; and relationship of the policy paper to the Estonian teacher education context. Suggestions for improving the situation included the need for systematic implementation and decisions on the national level, development of schools as learning communities, and leadership.

The teachers regarded the **document** as **sound, but general and even idealistic**. The teachers raised the question of whether teaching professionals are in a position to meet the changing requirements of the profession as described in the policy paper. There is evidence of the teachers reading the policy as mere rhetoric (cf. Saarinen, 2007). Simultaneously they attempt to describe the Estonian context as it is today, implying a need to tie their reading to descriptions of existing reality.

> The document is quite general. The question arises how these written proposals work out in real life. For example, teachers must have additional time to do academic work, put together study materials or carry out research. Currently, teachers use their own free time to do these things. If teachers want to write their master's

> thesis, they can take only two weeks of study-leave. (Teacher, 20 years' teaching experience)
>
> On the whole, I think that this document demands too much perfection. Of course it would be nice if all teachers could improve and develop themselves in different areas, but in the Estonian context this kind of experimentation could be hard to achieve. (Student teacher)

It is desirable that all teachers regardless of age realise their potential and identify opportunities for deepening their professional knowledge and understanding through degree studies in a higher education institution. For conceptual change to take place, long-term studies are needed. Short one or two-day seminars and workshops may provide insights, but they are not likely to change the teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning in a fundamental way (Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne & Nevgi, 2007; Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne & Nevgi, in press). The slow conceptual change is also echoed in the quote from the following teacher, who implicitly appears to suggest a stronger emphasis on the development of teachers' pedagogical skills alongside subject-matter content: 'The main change in teachers' way of thinking should be that they work with students, not with subjects. Most teachers see their professional development through the amendment of the subject-teaching methods because they have been prepared to work with subjects.' (Teacher, 10 years' teaching experience)

The EU policy paper emphasises teacher **mobility** as an important element in the development of the profession. The student teacher strongly emphasises the need for mobility and relates it to her own career path: 'I would like to emphasise one main feature of the teacher's profession: mobility. For me as a student teacher, mobility is one of the most necessary elements in the teacher's profession'. (Student teacher)

She then goes on to note that, despite good intentions, all efforts to develop the profession requires that **sufficient time** be allocated for this purpose in the individual teacher's schedule: 'Teachers need opportunities and *time* (original emphasis) to get extra qualifications. It would be interesting to know how these things are to be given to teachers'. Another teacher (7 years' teaching experience) focuses on the lack of infrastructures: 'Teachers cannot co-operate because there is no

time and place. Everybody has their own issues'. Further, dealing with one's own teaching is seen as the most urgent and time-consuming task, but in the long run co-operation, for instance, could work to ease the individual teacher's burden.

Salary is seen as an important incentive for the individual teacher, and a political tool on the school and societal levels. The relatively **low salary** level was perceived as a problem in developing the profession. The student teacher notes that 'Nobody is going to exhaust him or herself for such a small salary'. Another teacher relates this individual challenge to the broader context of local schools and politics:

> If a teacher raises his or her qualification, he or she wants better compensation. The allocation of salaries in schools doesn't change because of the growing qualifications of teachers. In many schools, the management does not support the teachers' careers because if they did some teachers would demand a higher salary. This is a great problem in small schools. (Teacher, 20 years' teaching experience)

Estonian teacher education received positive evaluations from the teachers. They maintained that the **teacher education** appears to a large extent to **fulfil the requirements set out in the document**. The student teacher praised the practical training included in the teacher education programme:

> The teacher training in college is focused on the creation of positive co-operation between schools and teachers, and on real teaching experience. This is shown by many experiences of teaching practice which a student must undertake during the five years. I am sure that if the students get a realistic view of schools, they will be able to manage their work better in the future. (Student teacher)

It may appear as if the teachers read the policy paper as a description of the current situation. However, the teachers do not limit themselves to this way of reading: rather, they identify a number of development needs. Despite the fact that teacher education received positive remarks, the teachers called for an open discussion on the national level regarding the development and future of the teaching profession and teacher

education. This was regarded as crucial in order for the document to find practical relevance. **Systematic implementation and decisions on the national level** following an open discussion were seen as vital. Getting practitioners and those involved in teacher education and policy development to participate and act in the systematic implementation of the ideas presented was regarded as an important element in the development of teacher education. The responsibility of all parties involved and the continuous nature of learning were stressed by one of the teachers, as exemplified in the following quote:

> Our teaching profession standard supports the same competencies (as the policy paper). The teacher cannot plan his or her professional development if nobody gives adequate feedback, and if there is no systematic development or organised training activity in the organisation. The priorities should be negotiated on every level, as the Finns did in the 1960-70s. They understood that many investments should be made in teacher retraining and continuing professional education. This is a question of mentality, and teachers should realise that taking courses for learning is at the core of what teaching is: it is not just fulfilling the qualification demands. (Teacher, 10 years' teaching experience)

A national-level discussion could also work to trigger internal dialogue in schools. The individual teacher acts in a community of fellow teachers, school staff, pupils, parents, organisations, and so on. The individual teacher's efforts, be they professional development or classroom research, should be seen in a broader context, the context of a **learning community**. The following quote, which reveals the need for support mechanisms, is an example of policy reading in which the reader engages in a dialogue with the document:

> It seems very important and right to think thoroughly about yourself and the development of the school, and to educate yourself systematically. Research, for example in the classroom, is really valuable, but still questions arise – why should I do this and what do I get from it? So the most important thing is to create supportive mechanisms. I started to think about *my* development . . . , which means that the document is also useful for the active teacher. (Teacher, 7 years' teaching experience)

If schools are to function as learning communities, **leadership** questions arise. One of the teachers painted a gloomy picture of a reality in which the school as a community does not support teachers' professional development. As the teacher points out, the situation is symptomatic of the lack of collegial support and leadership:

> The school leaders are indifferent. Some teachers are in such a hopeless situation that they don't want anything except to give their lessons. I personally have had enough opportunities to develop myself, and every time I come back from a training course I'm full of new ideas and excitement. But at school, everything goes back to zero. The investigation of my own work needs more time and co-operation. I think that a lot depends on the leader of the school. Our teachers are pretty well educated, but the culture of the school is in a very poor condition. (Teacher, 7 years' teaching experience)

Another example shows that teachers wishing to participate in continuing training may be expected to pay for their substitute. This indicates a fundamental lack of support from the school leaders: 'the substitution of lessons depends on the compliance of the school management. Sometimes, teachers have to pay for substitutes.' (Teacher, 20 years' teaching experience)

To summarise the teachers' views, the document was regarded as an excellent guideline, but simultaneously idealistic. The teachers felt that teacher education at the university level as envisioned in the policy paper is already to a large extent a reality in Estonia. The teachers embraced the ideas presented in the policy paper, yet also pointed out some practical restraints to their application. Time constraints, dissatisfaction with salary, and lack of true leadership in schools were regarded as obstacles to the development of the teacher profession. The teachers emphasised that the document needs systematic implementation and decisions on a national level, but raised the question of how actually to carry through the implementation of ideas still waiting to be fulfilled. The teachers' reading of the policy paper appears to be directed towards descriptive reading. They neither particularly emphasised teachers as active agents in policy development nor brought forth any opportunities they might have to influence

practice. There is an apparent need for such discussion among the teaching community.

Teacher Educators and Policy-makers on the State Level

In the data collected from the teacher educators and policy-makers (N = 5) the following themes emerged: national support structures, in-school reserves, school-based and network-based mentoring, teachers' skills and competence to engage in reflective practice and research, and joint research initiatives.

The focus-group interview indicated that the first year support programme, the induction year, is felt to be well implemented. Structures are in place to provide support for novice teachers. The interviewed group expressed a concern for the adequacy of support for the teachers in their second and third year of teaching. Like the teachers, the teacher educators and the policy-makers also maintained that currently support pretty much depends on the local school culture. They identified the need to develop teachers' opportunities to get support either in the school environment, the university or a regional support centre (i.e. regional centres for teachers continuing professional development and education). **National support structures** for those teachers who are no longer in their novice year but have limited teaching experience are mainly connected to furthering the career, not developing pedagogy. Teachers are not aware of these opportunities and these courses do not provide teachers with much-needed feedback on their development. The interviewees regarded teachers' professional unions both on the state and county level as possible actors in developing support structures for these teachers, but at present not all teachers are members of these organisations. An organised programme through the first, second, and third years of teaching was suggested as a means for addressing the need for continued support of teachers' professional development beyond the induction year. This period is important as the teachers may, at the end of the third year, apply for a certificate based on improved competence. The group expressed the sense that the threshold for seeking help may be high for beginning teachers, as seeking help may be seen as a sign of failure.

In addition to the national support structures, **in-school reserves** should be prepared to support the teachers' development. The same idea was expressed among the practitioner teachers. It was suggested that

teachers should have access to structured guidance and mentoring by experienced teachers or other relevant professionals throughout their career. A lot was seen to depend on the teachers themselves, and the level of co-operation in the school culture. It was noted that in some schools the support of novice and beginning teachers was assigned as the vice principal's task. The fact that the responsibility is assigned to a specific post helps to maintain the task on the agenda. Further, there is a need among teachers for guidance and psychological counselling, to prevent or to facilitate recovery from fatigue and burnout. The group raised the question of whose responsibility it is to deal with this challenge: national institutions, evaluators, study support at the university, or regional support centres.

The Estonian induction year is systematically implemented and appears to fulfil its role in supporting novice teachers. Some of the means of support, such as mentoring, could be expanded to include other than novice teachers. The group suggests that all schools should have at least one staff member with supervision and guidance skills; a **school-based mentor**. Trust and personal relationships were emphasised, leading the group to consider the possibility of having more than one person in the school possessing supervision, guidance, and mentoring skills. Again, the issue of the school as a community was brought to the fore. The group further explored the idea of establishing **network-based mentoring** on a regional level. They envisioned that teachers who have undergone mentor training could function as a resource for each other and for their colleagues. Within the network, teachers could take part in regular discussions about their training and development needs, and get support in relating their training needs to the broader context of the development plan of the institution in which they work.

Relating teachers' professional development to the school context is necessary. The group emphasised that the teachers' continuing training should be planned in congruence with the development plans of the school. The priorities of schools should be the basis for teachers' training schemes. Teachers' individual development ought to be connected to the **broader school context**. Making the connections could be facilitated through a **discussion forum**. The implementation of novel initiatives takes time, and the school leaders are in a key position to implement these initiatives. Teachers need awareness and knowledge of the relationships between national policy and priorities and the schools'

own plans and how these relate to their work and need for further development.

With regard to **reflective practice and research**, the interviewed group concluded that the willingness of teachers to investigate their own work is relatively weak. Teachers do not generally engage in research into their practices, or they disregard this as being non-scientific. The Estonian teacher's professional standard emphasises action research in everyday work, but one of the interviewees regarded teachers as ill-prepared for such a task. The work of the teacher involves discussions with parents on the pupils' progress and development. For this purpose, it is important that teachers investigate their teaching. Many continuing professional training courses involve conducting research on teaching. Another opportunity to research one's teaching is to engage in degree studies at a university. As noted in the responses from practising teachers, the amount of allocated time to work on a master's thesis is very limited (two weeks of study leave), which, certainly, may not encourage teachers to undertake the research work. A generation gap was envisaged by the interviewed group, postulating that older cohorts may lack the research skills, as these have not been emphasised in their training.

Yet the interviewees felt that teachers are keen on doing research, provided that they possess the required skills, and the school culture is appreciative of teachers engaging in research. The initial education at the university may not be enough to develop fully the skills required for research into everyday teaching practices if focus is solely on academic or scientific research. Asking relevant questions from a practical point of view and utilising these to improve practice may require a different approach to the research task from traditional academic research. To further teachers' research initiatives, activities on the national level were suggested, particularly for those teachers whose initial training has included developing research skills. Educational researchers, teachers and university lecturers would certainly benefit from networking and working together in this area. Joint research projects between schools and educational researchers and lecturers at universities were suggested as means of furthering teacher research nationally: 'Lecturers must be co-operative in initiating research needed in teacher education'. Such initiatives may require that teachers are allowed to take time off to improve research skills and to engage in research projects.

To summarise, teacher educators and educational policy-makers identified the need to develop national support structures for teachers beyond the novice year. Induction and mentoring could work as models for the expansion of the support structures. The possibilities of utilising in-school reserves, such as school-based mentoring, were discussed, and ideas on establishing network-based mentoring and a common discussion forum were presented. Teachers' skills and competencies to engage in reflective practice and research were regarded as vital, but in need of development. National level initiatives and joint projects between schools and universities were strongly supported by the teacher educators and policy-makers. The teacher educators and policy-makers suggested several ways to realise in practice the suggestions put forth in the policy document. Involving teaching professionals in discussion would be welcomed, in that this is likely to strengthen dialogue between education policy and practice.

Relating European Policy to National Policies

Teachers' competencies have been the core question in Estonian education policy in recent years. The competence expectations for teachers were first described in 'The Teachers' Standard' (2005) and in 'The National Programme of Teacher Training' (2006). In 'The Teachers' Standard', teachers' competencies are described in eight areas (Figure 1). The upper blocks are related to forming and leading the learning process (including planning and management, the formation of the learning environment, provision of information and learning, analysis and assessment of learners, development and the learning process). Interpersonal competencies, such as communication, co-operation, and motivation form the second block of competencies. Self-analysis is regarded as the prerequisite for professional development.

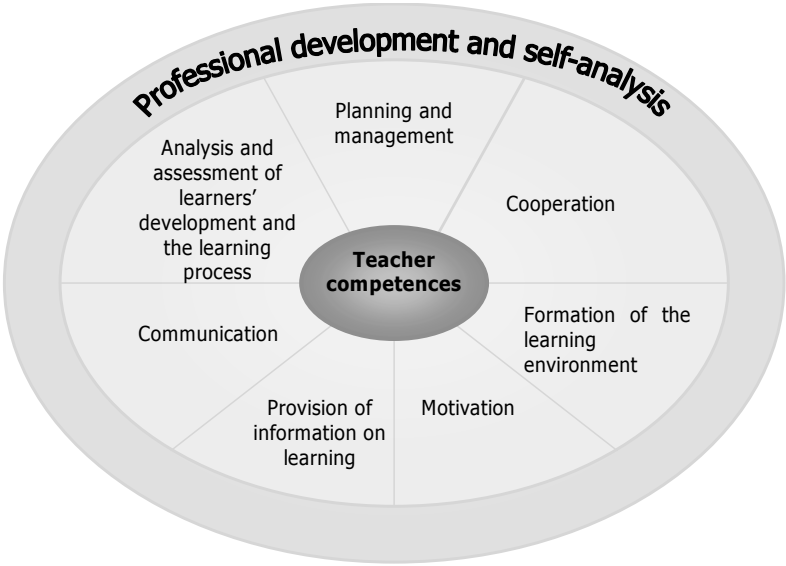

Figure 1. Teacher competencies according to the Estonian Teachers' Standard (Õpetaja, 2005)

'The Estonian Teachers' Standard' emphasises the facilitating of an attitude and understanding of the teacher as a reflective practitioner and a lifelong learner. In practice, the Estonian teacher is responsible for his or her own professional development and for identifying and planning personal learning needs. The goal of facilitating lifelong learning and reflection among teachers is very similar to what is envisioned in the European policy paper. The teachers' status and role expectations, however, are influenced by values and attitudes in the society, and this may be an issue in which European countries face different challenges.

In Estonia, there has been particularly strong development in the area of supporting novice teachers in the early stages of their career. In 2004, the induction year programme was initiated as part of teacher education. After the first stage involving all novice teachers who started work in comprehensive schools, it was extended in 2005 to include novice pre-school and subject teachers. The purpose of the induction year is to support novices' adaptation to the educational institution in which they work, and to promote the development of their professional skills through continuous analysis of practice and learning. The increase in novice teachers' self-efficacy during their first year of teaching (Poom-

Valickis, 2007) indicates that the induction year works successfully to support the novices. The launching of the induction year in the entire country included evaluation of the implementation model and empirical analysis. The outcomes of the evaluation enabled the identification of problems in the theoretical foundations of the model for the induction year, and the planning of activities to overcome these challenges (Eisenschmidt, 2006).

The Estonian induction year is based on the vision that teacher education, in the areas of pre-service, induction, and in-service as outlined in 'The Framework Guidelines for Teacher Education' (2000), forms a unified entity with the provision of support for the teacher's professional development as a guiding idea throughout the entire setup of training. This supports the goals outlined in the European policy paper.

Concluding Remarks

Based on the analyses of Estonian teacher education policy documents and interviews with specialists, we conclude:

- The regulations of teacher education in Estonia support similar goals to the European policy document but
- teachers' working conditions, school contexts and schools as organisations often do not support teachers' professional development strongly enough to fully live up to the expectations of developing the teacher profession as outlined in the European policy document. From this it follows that
- there is a need to support school development and school leadership as a whole for individual teachers to be able to develop their potential fully. For this purpose
- policies outlining educational initiatives for school leaders and local administrators are needed.

A number of factors influence the teaching profession in the European context. For instance, globalisation, economic trends, and the competitiveness of societies are indicators of and influences on education policy, teacher education and the teaching profession itself. In

creating a common European education area, other aspects of the society need to be taken into account as well.

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Transition and Translation: Increasing Teacher Mobility and Extending the European Dimension in Education

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> As with football, we in the UK find it hard to accept we might be middling in international education comparisons. But now that the latest Programme for International Student Assessment (Pisa) survey shows that this is the case – in maths and science as well as reading – it is time to start taking a measured interest in what we could learn from other countries (Hirst, 2007:22).

When we started writing this paper in December 2007 we had just received the news that the UK's rating in the 2006 OECD Pisa survey of 15-year-olds in 57 countries had dropped significantly from 7th to 17th in reading, 8th to 24th in mathematics and from 4th to 14th in science. As a result, we were presented with these dispiriting newspaper headlines:

> OECD gives UK teenagers only 'average' marks.
> (Turner, 2007)
> Britain slumps in world league table for maths and reading.
> (Woodward, 2007)
> UK plummets in world rankings for maths and reading.
> (Lipsett, 2007)
> Reading and maths standards falling in Britain, says OECD.
> (McSmith, 2007)
> UK children plummet down science league table.
> (Taylor, 2007)

When we agreed the final draft a few weeks later, we were confronted with this image and headline emblazoned across the front page of another national newspaper – painting an even grimmer picture of our urban schools.

Plate 1. The Observer newspaper 20 January 2008

> 'Knife scanners at school gates to curb attacks'
> Airport-style metal detectors will be installed at hundreds of school gates under sweeping measures to confront the growing problem of teenage knife crime (Townsend, 2008:1).

Middling, mediocre and menacing

It seems that state education in the UK is not only middling and mediocre but also menacing! Inner-city comprehensive schools rarely get a good press and indeed urban schools[1] are often vilified by the

[1] The educational literature relating to the theme of urban education is predominantly North American in origin and largely specific to the US context. In common with much UK literature on urban education there is a lack of clarity as to what exactly the term urban refers to and it is commonly used as an assumed term rather than one that is explicitly stated and defined. US literature on the preparation of teachers for teaching in city schools offers a number of insights that may be helpful in illuminating the UK context. Much of the literature takes as its central concern disparities between school populations in US cities and the teachers preparing to teach in them. US urban schools are increasingly being populated by black and Hispanic students, yet the teachers who are prepared to teach in those schools tend to be white and suburban; a situation exacerbated by increasing social and housing segregation so that many training teachers' first meaningful experiences of contact with black and Hispanic young people is in their teacher education programmes (see Olmedo, I. M. (1997), 'Challenging old assumptions: Preparing teachers for inner city schools'. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 13*. Research conducted on the preferences of pre-service teachers suggests that few wish to teach in settings different from those with which they are familiar (see

media. Clearly some of this can be dismissed as 'media hype' or even 'moral panic', nevertheless such constant criticism can be both demoralising and de-motivating for teachers – especially beginning teachers (BTs)[2]. The view that journalists present is typically sensational and often superficial. However, it is also insidiously powerful in the way that it influences the attitudes and values of the general public[3]. It is hardly surprising that UK teachers are rarely afforded the respect and trust enjoyed by some of their counterparts in other European countries.

This pilot project afforded the opportunity for IoE Tutors and BTs to experience first-hand learning and teaching in Finland – the country our media defines as 'top of the Global Class… among the super powers of education' (BBC, 2007).

And muddled and misguided

Peter Mortimore (2007) claims there is no coherent philosophy among policy-makers in the UK, suggesting that they remain unsure whether they want to promote an education system that continues to focus on

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Gilbert, S. (1995), 'Perspectives of rural prospective teachers towards teaching in urban schools'. *Urban Education, 30*.). The scale of the problem can be inferred from literature aimed at white, suburban teachers preparing to teach in urban areas (see, for example, Weiner, L. (1999), *Urban Teaching*. New York: Teachers College Press).
Two distinct themes emerge from this body of US literature: first, the cultural, social and spatial distance between the pre-service teachers being trained to work in urban contexts and the young people and communities they will be working with. Second, the need to develop further aspects of pre-service teacher programmes to help prepare teachers training to work in such contexts.

[2]The UK-based literature specifically addressing the preparation of teaching for working in urban schools is significantly sparser although there are distinct parallels to themes addressed by the US literature. Such parallels are especially evident in the nineteenth-century literature on the training of teachers to work with the urban poor (see, for example, Kay-Shuttleworth writing in 1862 and quoted in Cook, C. (1984), 'Teachers for the inner city: change and continuity'. In G. Grace (ed.), *Education and the city - theory, history and contemporary practice*. London: Routledge) and described subsequently by Grace (1978) as: 'Social and cultural missionaries – a kind of secular priesthood dedicated to the work of civilization' (Grace, G. (1978), *Teachers, Ideology and Control*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul., p 11).

[3] It is not surprising that we have raised the question before 'who will want to teach in them?' Ash, A. and Hall, D. (2006), *Urban ITT: Working with Urban Schools in Challenging Contexts*. London: University of London.

young people who are 'socially, economically and culturally advantaged and find learning easy', or whether they want to enable as many young people as possible to succeed. He points out how:

> Discussions of this issue often reveal a deep division between those who passionately believe that more must mean worse – whether in relation to the proportions passing exams or gaining university places – and those who believe that many more could succeed and that equity is as important a goal as high academic standards (Mortimer, 2007:7).

Mortimore suggests that educators should examine the system in Finland where no such divisions exist. He claims that it is the Finnish system's twin objectives of *securing adequate equity in education* and the *promotion of high standards* are the reasons it achieves such high PISA ratings; objectives that ensure that its average and below-average pupils achieve results gained by the most able in other countries (ibid).

There is evidence to suggest that UK policymakers recognise the value of 'twinning' these objectives. For example, the *2020 Vision the Report of the Teaching and Learning* (Gilbert, 2006) insists that in the UK schools, local and national government need to work together towards a society in which:

- a child's chances of success are not related to his or her socio-economic background, gender or ethnicity; and
- education services are designed around the needs of each child, with the expectation that all learners achieve high standards.

Numerous interventions have been introduced: Sure Start, London Challenge, Extended Schools, Excellence in the Cities, Personalised Learning (Miliband, 2004) and Every Child Matters (DFES, 2003), Youth Matters (DFES, 2005), Community Cohesion (2007)– all reference the importance of raising the achievement of young people from less privileged socio-economic groups.

However, despite these initiatives segregation and class division have historically been, and remain, endemic (and well-rehearsed) (Ball, 2003b; Apple, 2004; Reay, 2005). We suggest that this is not really a muddle, a lack of clarity from the government, but a deliberate attempt to 'reshape' education to support the now dominant neo-liberal economic policies.

Stephen Ball (2007) draws attention to the impact of (post)-neoliberalism on UK state education; he defines this as the shift away from state control to 'deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation' (Ball, 2007:18). He explains how private sector intervention in state education championed by consecutive Conservative Governments in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in Local Management for Schools (LMS), Compulsory Competitive Tendering, City Technology Colleges (CTC) and regulated by a restrictive and often punitive inspection regime – all promoting an education system predicated on a market-led culture. In the wake of this, during the 1990s the 'New' Labour Government introduced its 'Third Way', an approach that is:

> much more interventionist and considerably more managerialist. Outcomes remain the focus but they are now constituted as targets and benchmarks... (Ball, 2007:25).

Ball cites Giroux (1992) who describes this same approach in the USA as 'steering at a distance':

> It allows the state to insert itself deeply into the culture, practices and subjectivities of public sector organisations and their workers, without appearing to do so. It changes meaning; its delivers re-design and ensures 'alignment'. It objectifies and commodifies public sector work: the knowledge work of educational institutions is rendered into 'outputs', 'levels of performance' and 'forms of quality', that is this process of objectification contributes more generally to the possibility of thinking about social services like education as *forms of production,* as 'just like' services of other kind and other kinds of production. The 'soft' services like teaching which require 'human interaction' are re-made to be just like the 'hard' services (book supply, transport, catering, instructional media). They are standardised, calculated, qualified and compared. More generally performativity works to edge public sector organisations into a convergence with the private sector (Ball, 2007:27-28).

This 'Third Way' advocates 'flexibility', 'growth', 'creativity' and 'enterprises' that work in 'partnership'. Much is made of consumer 'choice' but this choice has produced consequences that have impacted on those who have *less* opportunity to choose. One consequence of the

neo-liberal agenda in the UK is the highly politicised and publicised effect of 'parent choice'.

Privilege and Parental Choice

14 Monday, 11 February 2008 London Lite

School that puts £166k on the value of a home

Houses in catchment area of top state secondary cost 25% more

BY MIRA BAR-HILLEL

HOMES within the catchment area of a London state school are selling for up to £166,000 more than the price of similar houses outside the area.

Fortismere Secondary School in Muswell Hill is one of the best state schools in the capital and has massive demand for places. As a result, parents can expect to pay anything between £750,000 and £1.2m for a four-bedroom house within the catchment area.

But similar-sized properties outside it sell for about £600,000 to £1m.

Andrew Hunt, of Kinleigh, Folkard & Hayward estate agency in Muswell Hill, said: "We're currently selling a four-bedroom house for £795,000 in the Fortismere catchment area for £795,000.

"But on the other side of Muswell Hill, a four-bedroom semi-detached house with a garage is going for just £629,950."

Lucian Cook, head of research at Savills, said: "Areas surrounding the top 25 per cent of secondary schools carry an average house price premium of 11 per cent above the average for the area. That exceeds 20 per cent in 31 per cent of cases."

The trend is also seen in some unlikely places. In Lower Clapton, two primaries, Rushmore and Millfields Community, have pushed nearby house prices to £500,000 — much more than other parts of Hackney.

INSIDE THE ZONE

4-BED TERRACE: £795K

OUTSIDE THE ZONE

4-BED SEMI: £629,000

Catchment 22: the four-bed terrace in the Fortismere secondary area, above, costs 25 per cent more than a four-bedroom semi, right, outside the catchment

'We'll rent for Max's sake'

MAX ALEXANDER-CHURCH secured a place at Fortismere after the 11-year-old and his mother, Amy Alexander, left, moved into a rented flat in the catchment area. Mrs Alexander, 36, said: "The house prices are crazy but we were desperate for Max to get in. People are punching each other to get children into this school."

Bright move: Max with mother Amy

ALL NEW THE LOVERS' GUIDE

Plate 2. London Lite Newspaper 11 Feb 2008. Reproduced with the permission of Solo Syndications

> [I]nternational comparison has shown, English schools are more socially differentiated than any in Europe. Some hardly warrant the description of 'comprehensive' at all, thanks to the parental choice policies pursued by successive governments. They may even be more socially stratified than the old grammar schools and secondary moderns they replaced (TES, 2002).

The number of different types of schools found in the UK is complex and confusing: public, private, independent, grammar, comprehensive, grant-maintained. Within state 'comprehensive' secondary education there exist: Academies and City Technology Colleges (independently-funded state secondary schools), Specialist Schools (85% of all schools have a specialist status), Faith Schools, Foundation Schools, Community Schools, Grammar Schools, Fresh Start, Beacon and Leading Edge Schools – the list goes on. While some parents seek out single-sex schools or single denominational (Faith) schools, others move location to secure a place for their child at a state comprehensive school that ranks high in National League Tables, while others (7%) are prepared to pay

high fees to send their children to independent schools outside the state-maintained sector.

Gorard and Fitz (Gorad and Fitz, 2006:800) caution against uncritical assertions that *parental choice* automatically leads to 'the polarization of schools, with those in more working class areas sucked in to a spiral of decline' (MacLeod, 2001:7). However, in line with others (Ball, 2003a; Power, 2004; Reay, 2005) we believe 'parental choice' largely remains the privilege of those who have the cultural capital to work their way through this complexity or the economic capital to buy their way out of it. Such choices are too often based on self-interest rather than altruism. This can be seen to reinforce inequality and class social divisions, with equity remaining undervalued while there is still a stark gap between the achievement of pupils in affluent and deprived communities. Add to this league tables, Ofsted Inspections, and the constant assessment of young people against externally set national standards (starting at the seven years of age) and the result is a system where:

> …school performance is more important than student involvement in that it doesn't matter how students "feel" about their education as long as they end up with the necessary qualifications (Power et al., 2004:281).

All this makes it difficult to see how Gilbert's Vision for 2020 or other recent government drives such as *Community Cohesion* (DFES, 2007) can be made to fit into a system predicated on a divided and divisive top-down approach to education. Given this somewhat 'dystopic' view of the situation in the UK, the opportunity afforded by this project to visit Finland and witness first-hand how they have maintained the balance between equity and achievement was received with enthusiasm.

Pilot project aims

The overall aim was, in line with the 1999 Bologna Declaration, to promote a 'European dimension …in HE through curricula, inter-institutional co-operation and mobility schemes for both students and teachers' (EHEA, 1999). The project set out to provide new stimulus for the PGCE course (for both BTs and ITs) and to develop:

- tutor skills in another socio-cultural context;
- knowledge and understanding of teacher training in another European country building on links already established with the IoE;
- a European experience to inform pedagogy and practice on the PGCE course;
- research collaborations between the two universities; and enable Further Professional Development for the IoE tutors in an innovative way;
- the role of the PGCE in the IoE's International Strategy – marketing and recruitment; and
- two actions of the Bologna Declaration: the second cycle (Master's) and the system of accumulation and transfer of credits which could contribute to the current re-modelling agenda.

One of the main vehicles for achieving the pilot's aims and objectives was to send IoE ITs and BTs on a week-long visit to Turku University. The focus of the visit for both ITs and BTs was to be comparative. The visit took place in January 2007 and was intended to generate a number of opportunities for all parties based around a simple pattern of:

- visiting training at Turku University;
- visiting trainees at the Turun normaalikoulu Turku University's training school; and
- meeting BTs, ITs and school staff to discuss and share experiences and insights.

The early discussions at Turku University enabled us to identify similarities and differences between the two countries' teacher training systems A summary appears below (Table 1).

Contrasting Structure of Initial Teacher Education	
London	Turku
Postgraduate course (90 credits towards a 180 credit MA)	Integrated with Degree Master qualification a pre-requisite for teaching
Intensive 1 year course (36 weeks) addressing clearly defined Standards	Less intensive
Two placements in contrasting 'partnership' schools Total of 24 weeks in school, 9-11 hrs teaching per week.	Single placement in a 'Normal' (university training) school Teaching organised more flexibly to meet individual needs
Successful completion of an Induction year is required before full QTS is conferred	No induction year but an emphasis on continuing professional development (CPD)
Focus on subject studies, pedagogy & wider professional issues (Inclusion, equal opportunities, school and the community, learning beyond the classroom, citizenship)	Focus on subject studies and pedagogy
Gap between the sociology of education/research in education and Initial Teacher Education. The former influencing policy, the latter mainly limited to small-scale action research projects	Gap between education and teacher training within the university – different faculties with the former much more likely to be involved in funded research

Table 1. Contrasts in Teacher Education

IoE Student Teachers

Interested BTs were asked to write a short statement saying why they wanted to be involved in the project and how they thought they would develop personally and professionally from this engagement. Predictably, most claimed they were interested to find out why Finland achieves such 'high ranking OECD PISA ratings' and to 'identify the pedagogic and cultural differences that made such high standards possible', others said they were keen to 'observe teaching in another EU education system' and 'to have the opportunity to compare and contrast English and Finnish ITE programmes'. They thought it would 'provide

insights,' 'prompt questions' and 'unsettle assumptions' and 'help encourage them to critically reflect on their own developing pedagogic practice by testing it out in a system that was unfamiliar to them'. Other reasons they identified were 'to experience its extreme climate', 'identify the extent to which Finnish design had an impact on individuals and environments', 'visit the home of Nokia and the Moomins' and 'have a *real* sauna (complete with outdoor ice plunge-pool!) and go to a *proper* ice hockey match'.

A total of nine students were selected, three from each of the following subjects: Art & Design, Business & Economics and Mathematics. The intention of the pilot project was to encourage students to respond critically to their (five-day) experience in a Finnish University Partnership Training School ('Normal School'). Tutors worked alongside students, observing learning and teaching and participating in discussions, they were keen not to establish a hierarchy and kept interventions to a minimum; aware of the power relations implicit in any student-tutor relationship they acted as 'critical friends' questioning BTs' initial perceptions and encouraging further critical analysis. All the students were encouraged to keep reflective diaries, share perceptions with each other and to discuss their developing understanding with the host students. On the final day they presented their reflections/findings to the host students and tutors. These are summarised in the following chart (Table 2).

London BTs' Findings and Observations		
Themes	Turku	London
Structure School Lesson	Pupils remain together in the same comprehensive schools from the age of 7-16 (with Class teachers till 11; subject teacher 13-16) Emphasis on 'didactics' at beginning of lessons Freedom and flexibility Relaxed pace Responsive to local needs	School starts at age 5/Nursery from 3/ Sure Start Four key stages between 5-16 Pupils move to secondary schools at age 11 Formulaic approach e.g. increasing emphasis on a three-part lesson structure Informed by National Strategies

Differentiation	Setting by interest Personalised learning embedded SEN – focuses on re-integration No scheme for G&T	Setting by ability Prescribed, imposed by central government e.g. Gifted and Talented (G&T) Individual Learning Plans (IEP) Monitoring and tracking Personalised Learning Streaming
Cultural diversity	Displays reference to local, national and European concerns No evidence that content of teaching takes into account cultural diversity except 2nd language teaching Evidence of diverse pupil intake	Multicultural displays Cultural diversity informs teaching Ethnically diverse intake wide range of cultural and religious backgrounds 1st, 2nd, 3rd generation immigrants
Environment	Open, 'soft' community spaces within the school ICT used more judiciously and usually in computer labs	Victorian moving towards 'Schools of the Future' Rush towards new technology – but still grappling with relevant pedagogy
Assessment and accountability	Test-free zone!! Focus on Formative, Self-evaluation & Ipsative Verbal assessment prioritised, No league tables Negotiated between teacher and pupil Relaxed, less stressful Accountable to parents	Highly structured and regulated Assessment at ages 5, 7, 11,14,16,18 results inform league tables published in national and local press Paperwork burdensome Tensions, pressure to achieve for both teachers and pupils
School ethos/atmosphere	No uniform Self-motivated Pupils keen to learn – empowered Communities Relaxed Negotiation Confident	Range from highly competitive to more community-focused but always with a focus on results – testing & accountability Some schools segregated on grounds of religion, sex and class. Increasing

		emphasis on uniformity – dress code, keep left, keep off the grass, don't touch, be on time Under surveillance – police/camera
Relationships Teachers and Parents, Teachers and Government, Teachers and Pupils, Teachers and wider Society	Teachers are trusted to be professionals. Allowed the freedom to develop curricula in response to perceived local needs. Teachers self-regulating National curriculum forms the basis but is open to wide interpretation Parents respect teachers No threat of inspections Valuing of the teaching qualification as something transferable – relevant to other professional occupations Good pupil attendance	Assessment has a high profile Accountability Clearly defined National Curriculum Programmes of study Continuous monitoring Swamped with paperwork Evidence-based – criterion referencing Teachers under enormous pressure OFSTED: inspections HMI by senior management, LEAs, student self-evaluations Peer reviews Teacher undervalued – low status Pupil truancy levels high in some areas

Table 2. BTs' observations

It is important to point out that we did not go to Finland with a finely honed research question; rather, we saw the visit as a pilot that would enable us to identify how we might engage in collaborative research in the future. Emphasis was placed on the experiential and the dialogic with observation, reflection and discussion informing the BTs' initial findings. This 'grounded' approach (Charmaz, 2003) helped to develop an understanding of the *holistic* overview or *big picture*, whilst the reflection in and on action (Schon, 1983) pointed towards a need for a more detailed, 'fine-grained analysis' informed by contextual information.

It is anticipated that each cycle of this project (this is only the pilot stage) will elicit various kinds of data which will help to build a 'richer' understanding. As Ryan and Bernard (2003) point out, the power of this type of ethnography lies in its embrace of context, complexity, meaning, and its emphasis on the everyday lives of individuals (and in this case the IoE/Turku teachers/tutors). What is more, there is a looseness to this approach which begins with a broad-brush approach and gradually produces more focused questions based on insights which arise within the particular research context. It is:

> … an iterative process by which the analyst becomes more and more "grounded" in the data and develops increasingly richer concepts and models of how the phenomenon being studied really works (Ryan and Bernard, 2003:279).

Educational Pilgrims?

We were aware that our visit to Finland could be seen as merely part of a steady stream of *'educational pilgrims'* keen to get a first-hand look at how Finland has 'created a well-performing education system and sustained the main features of a welfare state' (Sahlberg, 2007:161). Sahlberg is critical of those who simply make comparisons by examining the PISA rankings of different countries rather than trying to learn about national underlying characteristics that might explain performance (ibid: 163). In the table below (Table 3), he highlights significant differences between the Finnish system and the way in which other countries, (including the UK), have developed since the 1980s under the influence of market-orientated neo-liberalism. The table he produced, although couched in more considered language, accords with many of the observations made by the BTs.

Global Education	Finland
Standardisation Setting clear, high and centrally prescribed performance standards for schools, teachers and students to improve the quality of outcomes.	Flexibility and loose standards Building on existing good practices and innovations in school-based curriculum development, setting of learning targets and networking through steering by information and support.
Focus on numeracy and literacy Basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics and natural sciences as prime targets of education reform.	Broad learning combined with creativity Learning and Teaching focus on deep and broad learning giving equal value to all aspects of an individual's growth of personality, moral, creativity, knowledge and skills.
Consequential accountability School performance and raising student achievement are closely tied to the processes of promotion, inspection and ultimately rewarding or punishing schools and teachers based on accountability measures, especially standardised testing as the main criteria of success.	Intelligent accountability with trust-based professionalism Adoption of intelligent accountability policies and gradual building of a culture of trust within the education system that values teachers' and headmasters' professionalism in judging what is best for students and in reporting their learning progress

Table 3. Some aspects of global education reform trends and education policy principles in Finland since the 1980s (adapted from Sahlberg 2007)

Raw data: (The danger of) Jumping to conclusions!

On closer analysis, the UK BTs' observations appeared to confirm their preconceptions; they tended to seek out evidence to support rather than 'unsettle assumptions'. For example, lessons in Turku were identified as 'flexible' and 'relaxed' whilst in London they were 'formulaic' and 'highly structured'; teachers in Finland are 'trusted', 'respected' and 'allowed freedom' whereas in London they are 'undervalued', of 'low status' and 'under surveillance'. Clearly this fails to do justice to the complexity of the two systems. More worrying is the fact that the UK

BTs failed to recognise their role in this discourse, and do not identify themselves as being in a position (as new entrants into the profession) to affect change or challenge the situation. Rather than seeing their roles as *agents of change,* they appear as victims of the system – a worrying negativity comes through. There is a sense that they are powerless against their inevitable control by central government policy, dominated by managerialism and anti-intellectualism. This supports Ball's claim that the UK government has effectively reduced the role of teachers to that of a *classroom technician*. He insists that 'the politics of education since the 1980s can be interpreted as centering upon a primary concern – taming the teacher' (Ball, 2003b:10). He suggests the teacher is being both silenced and decentred:

> What is being achieved is the redistribution of significant voices. As always it is not just a matter of what is said but who is entitled to speak. The teacher is increasingly the absent presence in the discourses of education policy, an object rather than a subject of discourse (Ball, 2003b:12).

What also became clear is the extent to which the BTs' observations of the Finnish system and their reporting on their own was limited to current policies and practices – a postmodern reading of the surface – and very matter-of-fact. There was limited critical reflection and little evidence of *epistemological curiosity*[4]. They appear to be in the grip of the government rhetoric reinforced by negative media hype; the hype and rhetoric that we introduced you to in this paper. As tutors we are particularly anxious to ensure BTs resist any suggestion that teaching *can* be reified in this way. It encourages a reductive, mechanistic approach to education and ignores the idiosyncratic, contingent aspects of learning and teaching (aspects such as pupil intake, teachers' preferences, and prevalent socio-economic relations). The shift towards the M level (King, 2008) for ITE courses in the UK will encourage further critical engagement, including the epistemological curiosity that Friere (1999:51) recognises as essential.

[4] Epistemological curiosity – a curiosity that investigates the nature of knowledge, its foundation, scope and vitality: one that is not always present in dialogue. Freire, P. and Macedo, D. P. (1999), 'Pedagogy, Culture and Race'. In J. Leach and B. Moon (eds), *Learners and Pedagogy*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Changing Contexts

> In our attempts to understand education policies comparatively… the complex relationships of ideas and the dissemination of ideas and the recontextualisation of ideas remains the central task (Ball, 1998:127).

Sahlberg 2007 points out that, although education policy discourse in Finland has been subject to ongoing changes since the 1980s, Finland has been slow to instigate the market-oriented (neo-liberal) education reforms that have dominated policies elsewhere in Europe. Instead, a:

> …steady improvement in student learning has been attained through Finnish education policies based on traditional values of equity, flexibility, creativity, teacher professionalism and trust (Sahlberg, 2007:147).

He quotes Lewis (2005) who agrees that traditional values have endured including 'cultural hallmarks as a law abiding citizenry, trust in authority, commitment to one's social group, awareness of one's social status, position, and a patriotic spirit'. This is a view that seems to validate the claim about the Finnish system made by Mortimore (2007) earlier.

However, we note with interest that Sirkka Ahonen (2006) paints a different picture of Finnish society. In contrast to the impression given so far, she suggests 'a crisis is looming' (Ahonen, 2006:215) and that Finns would be wrong to be too complacent. She points out that the number of young people bothering to vote is declining, as is the number engaging in volunteer work. She suggests that this can be seen as the result of a gap in their education which she defines as a lack of 'active citizenship'. Although the culture of the classroom can be recognised as 'democratic', young people in Finland, like their teachers, do not have a wider 'voice'; for example, their representation on school councils is not the norm but is looked upon with suspicion[5]. Ahonen suggests that schools have become 'more and more skills dispensaries than cradles of

[5] Since a radical experiment to introduce student democracy in this way in the 1970s was abandoned when it became an acrimonious struggle between the political left and right.

homogeonous citizenship' (Ahonen, 2006:220) with very little emphasis on society *per se*. Simola (1995 in Ahonen 2006:220) claims that Finnish teachers 'appear to be pedagogically conservative and somewhat reserved in their relations with pupils and their families'.

Ahonen contends that teacher education in Finland focuses too exclusively on developmental and social psychology and subject-specific knowledge as the basis of teacher expertise without recourse to the changing nature of society. She claims that the culture of teacher education is one that promotes the notion of the teacher as 'a tool of the state to maintain necessary political conformity and harmony in the country' (in Simola 1995:223). This is not that dissimilar to the description Ball gives of the UK government's policy of 'taming… the teacher' (Ball, 2003b:10).

Our reading of recent texts by Finnish academics (Jakku-Sihvonen and Niemi, 2006; Kallo and Rinne, 2006) suggests that education in Finland has not been isolated or protected from the neo-liberal views of society. Like their European counterparts, they are being affected by demands of cost-effectiveness or the growth of parent choice encouraging competition between schools; albeit at a slower pace. Equality of opportunity is starting to change and educational achievement is becoming more differentiated. Giroux's description of how 'performativity works to edge public sector organisations into convergence with the private sector' (op cit) applies in Finland too. The 'soft' services of teaching being turned into the 'hard' services to be standardised, qualified and compared. However, Ahonen insists:

> On the basis of their education, teachers are not too well prepared to elaborate the new corporate ways of running schools not to speak of questioning them… Neither are they enlightened to see the broad spectrum of social changes in society… the minimal share of studies towards social awareness in teacher education must be deplored. How can a teacher relate his or her work to the social situation of the country, if he or she has not reflected on what is happening in society? (Ahonen, 2006:222)

It appears that Finnish student teachers are not well prepared to deal with changes in society, they are not encouraged to reflect and discuss social and political affairs as part of their training and, in turn, their

teaching can be seen to elide references to these issues. As Ahonen points out, Finnish students 'live amidst a flood of information from the ubiquitous media while perhaps missing the capacity for multiperspectival views of her or his time and world' (Ahonen, 2006:221-222).

Perhaps Finnish student teachers' conservatism and their lack of critical engagement with changing social issues goes some way towards explaining why the UK BTs found little evidence of curriculum materials or teaching methods developed to meet the needs of a growing immigrant population (beyond Finnish as an additional language). Unlike the UK, Finland is not steeped in post-colonial histories nor does it have the same immigration patterns that make UK the rich pluralist society it is today. It is worthy of note that 'more than 30% of pupils in the teacher training school in Turku (Turun Normaalikoulu) speak another language than Finnish as their home language, pupils speak 29 different languages. The largest language groups are Russians, Albanians, Arabs, Kurds and Vietnamese pupils.' (Vesa Valkila, Principal). University tutor Heine-Marja Jarvinen recognises the need to address the paucity in provision for these young people:

> Finland is such a young country [in terms] of immigration and we have not received immigrants for long we don't have any rules, curricula or syllabi in that field. This is something we should do more of. It is actually Turku that has exception in that it has so many immigrants here. Some parts of Finland have none at all. We should actually initiate the development, originate these materials as leaders of educational research we have a responsibility to do more. We have been focusing on Finnish as a second language and moving education towards internationalisation which is linked to Finnish as a second language. We need to think about how we can explore culture, what culture conveys and how they can enrich what we already have.

As noted, it is important to recognise that the formation of attitudes and values to cultural diversity is not restricted to schooling, the 'ubiquitous media' in its various manifestations is helping to (re)form the attitudes and values of young people. For example, a research project carried out on the way cultural diversity is represented on the websites of large Finnish companies found they were the least likely of eight European

countries to present diversity statements (Bairoh, 2005). She points out that her findings coincide with those of Trux (2002) and Forsander et al. (2004) who claim that diversity and/or diversity management has not (yet?) entered the discourses of Finnish companies.

However, it was not part of our remit to explore cultural diversity (immigration/interculturalism) and its implications for pedagogy. Just as we have tried to unpick the reasons why Finland remains 'top of the global class', the Finnish visit to the UK will give them the opportunity to identify the different strategies for inclusion being employed in London schools and to consider their relevance for their own practice.

Conclusion: bemused and bewildered

The opportunity afforded by this project to experience learning and teaching in Finland has resulted in more questions than answers and it is perhaps not surprising that we find ourselves entering the next phase of the collaboration more than a little *bemused*. It is important to reiterate that this is a pilot project and was only set up to establish links and identify areas for future development. The BTs' responses were not pre-determined by a clearly defined research agenda and, as such, they should be recognised as experiential in nature – first impressions and a springboard to the next cycle. It would be reasonable to say that we find ourselves slightly *bewildered* by the conflicting and contradictory views on the Finnish success story and draw comfort from Zagar who advocates that we continue with the dialogue:

> Not surprisingly – as it is with weather or football – everybody has an opinion… Often these views differ; they can be conflicting and, sometimes, exclusive. In a way, these discussions and different, sometimes, dissenting views reflect the complexity of the phenomenon itself (Zagar, 2008:1).

We started with a newspaper headline and would like to end with an equally thought-provoking recent image to put the UK position into more context. Our press invests a lot of time nationally discussing the weather and football and, more recently, like Finland, it has been debating the effect immigration will have on the country and its education system. We certainly have not found the solutions and, with

regard to teacher training, we need to recognise and then resist the rhetoric, move away from the simplistic comparisons by layering findings with epistemological curiosity and a critical engagement with recent literature – identifying not only how another country is seen but also how it sees itself – changing.


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Plate 3. The Daily Express 28 January 2008. Reproduced with the permission of The Daily Express

We look forward to the next stage when Finnish students and tutors visit London to make their observations in our institution and partnership training schools and identify for themselves how, why and to what extent *interculturalism* is working.

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Professional Development of Educationalists in the Perspective of European Lifelong Learning Programmes 2007-2013

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1 Introduction

The paper researches the perspectives of educationalists' professional development in the Lifelong Learning Programmes of the European Union (EU) in 2007-2013. The paper studies, on one hand, the opportunities of professional development that international activities in Lifelong Learning Programmes offer to educationalists. On the other hand, the paper studies the challenges related to the professional development of educationalists in supra-national initiatives, like the EU Lifelong Learning Programmes. The educationalist concept is used in the paper to refer to professionals working in the education sector: e.g. policy-makers, school directors, principals, teachers, trainers etc. The concept of international activity refers to any activities, e.g. project management, administration, mobility, within the European Lifelong Learning Programmes. The basis of the paper is my professional and personal experiences and observations while working as Project Manager in European Programmes in Finland at the national level and in the CEDEFOP at the European Community level.

Never before have educationalists had so many opportunities of international co-operation as today in the 21st century. Educationalists are able to interact with their colleagues in different education contexts across different countries and cultures. Educationalists may learn from each other, exchange their professional practices and build knowledge about their profession globally. These opportunities have become available as a result of globalisation and the development of information and communication technology (ICT), which enables the fast and easy exchange of information and communication. Globalisation, defined as the rapid acceleration of cross-border movements of capital, goods, services and information as a result of cheap energy and transportation,

trade liberalisation and the development of ICT, has impacted on all fields of life including education (Green, 2002). However, the impact of globalisation on education has also created challenges for educationalists. Today educationalists need to accommodate many transformations in education and they are expected continuously to develop their professionalism.

Since the late 20th century in Europe, the EU has created a further external force impacting on education in the member states through the European open method of co-ordination. The method implies that each member state of the EU is fully responsible for organising its education and training systems and the content of teaching. However, the EU's role is to contribute to the development of quality in education by encouraging co-operation between member states and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action. The EU aims specifically to develop the European dimension in education, to stimulate mobility and promote co-operation between European schools and universities, to develop the exchange of information on issues common to education systems in member states, to encourage the development of distance education and, finally, to stimulate co-operation with non-EU countries and international organisations. As a result, the educational policies of the member states are steered toward the common goals of the European policies of education.

In Finland, EU membership since 1995 has allowed practitioners in education to join in European programmes, and the same applies to the rest of the 26 European member states. At the beginning of 2007, a new Lifelong Learning Programme for the 2007-2013 period was launched by the European Commission. The programme comprises four sectoral programmes: Comenius for school education; Erasmus for higher education; Leonardo da Vinci for vocational training; and Grundtvig for adult education. In addition, there are transversal programmes focusing on policy co-operation, languages, ICT and dissemination and the exploitation of results at the European level. The financial support to implement the Lifelong Learning Programme for the period is about EUR 7,000 million. The Commission's quantified targets of the programmes are e.g. for Comenius to involve at least three million pupils in joint educational activities, for Erasmus to have supported a total of three million individual participants in student mobility by 2012, for Leonardo da Vinci to increase placements in enterprises to 80,000 per

year by the end of the programme and for Grundtvig to support the mobility of 7,000 individuals involved in adult education per year by 2013[1]. The scale of the Lifelong Learning Programme indicates that, although the national governments in the member states are responsible for their education systems, the European programmes aim to steer education development in the member states toward the common European goal of becoming a world quality reference. This aim is achieved by fostering interaction, co-operation and mobility between education and training systems within the European Community. The quality of European education is promoted through peer-learning, benchmarking and exchanging of best practices in international activities as cross-border student exchanges, international joint activities and placements. Although students are the main beneficiaries of the programmes, educationalists have a central role in mobilising the programmes by initiating, planning, implementing and monitoring the activities in local education contexts.

On the other hand, participation in international activities in the European programmes also implies receiving teachers and students from other countries to study or work in local educational contexts. As a result, educationalists who may not have initiated the activities may become involuntarily involved. In such cases, the need for professional development may be imposed and can be perceived as a threat by educationalists, who lack the necessary skills in the activities. Further, as a result of globalisation and the cross-border mobilisation of people, local communities are becoming more multi-cultural. Therefore, educationalists need to work with students from different cultures and countries of the global village, which also sets new demands for educationalists' professional development in internationalisation. In addition, ICT is developing into an integral part of mainstream education and is also integrated in the European Lifelong Learning Programmes. For example, eTwinning, an initiative started in September 2004 under the EU transversal programme to promote collaborative ICT-projects in education across Europe, illustrates the impact a European initiative of ICT may have on school work at the local level in the member states. eTwinning[2] has grown rapidly in participation with

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/newprog/index_en.html

[2] http://www.etwinning.net/ww/en/pub/etwinning/index2006.htm

more than 20,000 schools registered in ICT-enabled collaborative activities with other schools in other European countries in 2007.

International activities in educational organisations, as a result of globalisation and the policies of supra-national bodies like the EU, create opportunities and challenges for educationalists' professional development as new knowledge, skills and competencies are required in the changing work environment. The focus of this paper is on international activities within the European Lifelong Learning Programmes since globalisation is too broad an issue to be researched in the paper's scope. The aim of this paper is to contribute to research by bringing new knowledge about professional development in international activities in the framework of European Lifelong Learning Programmes in education in the 21st century. The research questions posed in the paper are: What are the opportunities and challenges for educationalists' professional development in the international activities of the EU Lifelong Learning Programmes in the member states? What kind of professional development can educationalists acquire in international activities of education? Can informal learning acquired in international activities be recognised as learning outcomes and professional development?

In the following section, current theories of professionalism in education are researched to conceptualise the opportunities and challenges of professional development of educationalists in international activities.

2 Democratic professionalism and internationalisation

As discussed earlier, a number of fundamental transformations are underway which have an impact on education in modern societies. On one hand, growth of the globalised world economy and the supra-national body of the EU are transforming the education policies and systems of national governments in Europe. These fundamental transformations are a reality in the daily activities of educational organisations and ultimately have consequences on personal and professional lifestyles of individual educationalists. The most critical transformation, however, is the demand for professional development

as globalisation has the greatest impact on the demand for skills and qualifications (Green, 2002). Therefore, today there is also a demand for educationalists' professional development in the education sector .

On the other hand, the current social research has identified the emergence of a new individualism in which people are compelled to define themselves and adapt to the multiple changes caused by fundamental transformations in societies (Giddens, 1991). According to Halpin, a key aspect of the process of new individualism for teachers is the search for a teacher-professional identity that shapes them as teachers and which helps them come to terms with and to live and work purposively within modern society (Halpin, 2005). Halpin argues that in seeking the teacher-professional identity teachers wish to navigate a professional course that is significantly of their own making. Therefore, the paper argues that educationalists may find international activities as opportunities, where they can build their new professional identities, acquire new knowledge, skills and competencies and develop professionalism, which helps them to adapt to transformations in education.

Further, the theory of teachers' democratic professionalism helps to conceptualise educationalists' professional development in international activities (Whitty, 2000). According to Whitty, teachers' democratic professionalism is the next reformation of professionalism in which teachers' professional expertise is being harnessed for a new democratic project for the 21st century, requiring new collectivist forms of association within and beyond the education context (Whitty, 2000). As a result, educationalists may see international activities as ways of associating beyond their education contexts in cross-border activities. In this paper, the concept of cross-border activities is interpreted as crossing the borders of educational organisation and crossing the national borders of a country. New collectivist forms of association in international activities enable educationalists from different cultures and countries to build new professional identities and professionalism beyond their educational context. To sum up, educationalists may find international activities in European Lifelong Learning Programmes as opportunities for professional development in which they may associate beyond their education context in international activities and construct their own biographies and professional identities.

However, there is a great distinction between educationalists' free choices about joining in international activities and being forced to participate (Halpin, 2006). Further questions rightly raised by Halpin and Whitty about new democratic professionalism also concern international activities: Which international activities are most suited for the purpose of professional development of educationalists? How should the activities be organised in the education context? Who will take the lead in initiating them and with what content and programmes? Although no direct answers can be given to these questions, it is obvious that and, as the concept 'democratic professionalism' implies, many of the choices are left for individual educationalists to decide on. Further, democratic professionalism and new collectivist forms of association beyond the educational context could also imply organisational learning. Teams of educationalists may associate in international activities beyond their educational institution to support not only individual professional development, but also organisational learning. The organisational learning of educational institutions in international activities can be studied with the theory model of expansive learning developed by Engeström (Engeström, 1987). Engeström uses the concept of a change laboratory and defines a participative method of developing work. According to Engeström's participative method of developing work, an educational organisation can implement deep changes in working methods and culture as well as continuous improvement of activities in a change laboratory. First, a desired vision of the future is created and then practical solutions to current problems can be produced, which are steps to the new revised ways of working. The steps in the circle of expansive learning can be described as: (1) realising a need for change; (2) identifying a crisis of old working methods or a dead-end; (3) looking for and designing wider objectives, motives and ways of working; (4) testing and developing a new way of working; (5) implementation of a new way of working; and (6) establishing the new way of working and applying it in the organisation (Engeström, 1987).

The participative method of developing work explains how a team of educationalists within an educational institution may associate beyond their educational context to look for a solution to an existing problem in their organisation and develop new ways of working in international participation of EU Lifelong Learning Programmes. Therefore, the new ways of working developed in international activities not only support the professional development of individual educationalists, but the

organisational learning of the educational institution. Organisational learning in international activities raises, however, further questions: Do all educationalists have access to the international development activities of an educational organisation? If not, what are the criteria for their inclusion and exclusion? Are all forced to participate as organisational practices are developed? How does the development work fit into the full-time daily work of the educationalists in the educational organisation?

The theories of democratic professionalism and expansive learning discussed above support the argument of international activities as forms of the professional development of educationalists within and beyond the education context. While the possibilities are supported by the theories, it is evident that there are many questions and challenges not explored yet in educationalists' professional development in international activities of education. Next, this paper aims to conceptualise, with the theoretical framework of communities of practice, how professional development takes place in the collectivist associations of educationalists beyond the educational contexts in international activities.

3 International communities of practice

The theory of communities of practice is researched to explain new forms of collectivist associations of educationalists in international activities (Wenger, 2000). According to Wenger, communities of practice are groups of people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour. Communities of practice share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 2000). Wenger argues that learning in communities of practice means developing social structures in parallel with personal transformation. The structure of social learning systems includes three elements: communities of practice, boundary processes among the communities and identities shaped by participating in the systems (Wenger, 2000). The theory model of communities of practice supports the argument of professional development of educationalists in international activities. International activities in European programmes can be identified as communities of practice with international dimension. Educationalists' professional development can be explained

as boundary processes among their local professional communities and international professional communities. As a result, new professional identities of educationalists with an international dimension may be shaped in participating in the learning systems of international communities of practice.

The knowledge-creation metaphor could be used to explain the possibilities of professional development and, more specifically, the role of ICT in international activities of education (Paavola and Hakkarainen, 2005). According to Paavola and Hakkarainen, the trialogical approach to learning is a process of knowledge creation which concentrates on the interaction through common objects (or artefacts) of activity, not just between people, or between people and environment. The metaphor of knowledge creation through trialogue explains the professional development of educationalists when specific ICT tools help educationalists collaborate for the advancement of knowledge in international communities of practice. ICT tools enable educationalists from different education contexts to join in a progressive inquiry on shared objects of interest. Therefore, ICT enables collaboration, knowledge creation and professional development in international communities of practice from local education contexts.

Finally, the theory of Networked Learning Communities provides further support to the notion of professional development of educationalists in international learning communities (Daly, 2006). According to Daly, the networked learning communities aim to establish mutual support amongst clusters of schools, local education authorities and universities through collaborative inquiry. Networked learning communities of education can also be identified at the European and international levels, co-ordinated by international organisations, for example the EU, UNESCO etc. The concept of networked learning communities supports the argument of learning and professional development of educationalists and their organisations in collaborative inquiry in international networked learning communities.

However, the questions of inclusion and exclusion are raised again to discuss the professional development of educationalists in international communities of practice. Who in local educational contexts has access to the international communities? Who has the power to decide on and what are the criteria for inclusion and exclusion of individual

educationalists in international activities? The challenges of professional development in international communities enabled by ICT are more prominent. Participation in ICT-enabled knowledge creation communities requires digital literacy skills, which excludes non-digitally literate educationalists from the possibilities of professional development in the international communities. Many other questions are certainly raised with the advancement of globalisation.

To sum up, this paper has conceptualised professional development of educationalists in international activities from the perspective of theory of communities of practice. The professional development of educationalists takes place in international communities of practice, which are characterised by participatory, social and collaborative approaches of learning. Progressive inquiry, advancement of knowledge and knowledge creation in international collaboration are the focus of learning and professional development in international activities. Specific ICT tools enable knowledge creation and the professional development of educationalists in international communities of practice at a distance from local education contexts. The theory of communities of practice supports the argument that international activities in education provide opportunities for educationalists' professional development. The participative, social and collaborative nature of learning in international communities, however, raises further questions. The most critical question relates to access to professional development in international communities of practice. Who decides about inclusion or exclusion? Is it an individual educationalist, the educational organisation, education authorities at the local or national level or external agents?

4 Professional development in international activities

In the next section, the paper studies the nature of professional development of educationalists in international activities. What are the knowledge, skills and competencies that educationalists may develop in international communities of practice? In general, it can be assumed that learning in international activities may be formal, non-formal or informal (CEDEFOP, 2000). Considering the participative, social and collaborative elements of learning in international activities, tacit knowledge can be argued to play an important role in knowledge

creation and professional development. Tacit knowledge means knowledge creation through a knowledge spiral with four types of knowledge conversion (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995): 1. socialisation (learning to understand tacit knowledge through participation in an expert community); 2. externalisation (transforming tacit knowledge into a public form); 3. combination (synthesising expert knowledge); and 4. internalisation (learning to master expert knowledge through sustained practices) (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Educationalists learn to understand tacit knowledge through participation in international communities of practice. The tacit knowledge is transformed into explicit knowledge locally or globally, which again is transformed and combined into new expert knowledge. The internalised new knowledge is developed into new practices in local education contexts.

To understand professional development, the concepts of knowledge, skills and competencies need to be defined. According to Freidson, knowledge and skills are essential to work and they complement each other in work performance (Freidson, 2001). Skill refers to the capacity to accomplish a task and it may be kept separate from the substantive knowledge connected with the task itself, while competence comprises knowledge, skills and attitudes (Freidson, 2001). Key competencies defined by the European Commission give a starting point to analyse the competencies that educationalists may develop in international activities of education (EC, 2005). The key competencies, which are essential for people's successful life in a knowledge society, in personal and social spheres and for employability are: (1) communication in the mother tongue; (2) communication in foreign languages; (3) competencies in maths, science and technology; (4) digital competence; (5) learning to learn; (6) interpersonal, intercultural and social competencies and civic competence; (7) entrepreneurship; and (8) cultural expression. First, participation in international activities can be assumed to help develop communication in foreign languages, especially for educationalists coming from outside of the major language areas in Europe. Second, international activities enabled by ICT may enhance the digital competencies of educationalists. Third, interpersonal, intercultural and social competencies can be argued to be developed due to the participative, social and collaborative aspects of learning in international communities. Finally, cultural expression and learning to learn could be competencies that are developed in the processes of international activities.

According to the European Commission, some of the key competencies, for example social, interpersonal, civic, entrepreneurship, learning to learn, and cultural expression, cannot be taught in traditional ways but require new approaches to organising learning (EC, 2005). The Commission notes that today teachers need to work together with each other and with the local community and to deal with heterogeneous groups and, therefore, teachers also need new competencies and continuous learning in order to respond to these new challenges. As already discussed in the paper, educationalists need to respond to globalisation which impacts on education with major transformations and, therefore, professional development and new competencies are needed. Educationalists have the possibility to participate in international activities to develop the competencies needed in today's globalised world. In the 21st century, professionalism in education and teacher training should take the modern globalised world into account. Therefore, an international element should be part of all teacher-training programmes at all levels of education to provide international competencies for teachers to work in the changing world of education. Further, educationalists already working in the education sector should have the possibility to acquire international competencies as informal learning through participation in international activities.

Eraut (2000) questions why we should make tacit knowledge more explicit and proposes practical reasons, for example to improve the quality of a person's or a team's performance, to help to communicate knowledge to another person, to keep one's actions under critical control or to construct artefacts that can assist decision making or reasoning. This paper argues that the reason for turning the implicit and informal learning of educationalists in international activities into explicit formal learning outcomes and qualifications is to give value to the professional development acquired in international contexts beyond the context of their institutions. Therefore, there is a need for valuing educationalists' professional development in international activities in national teacher qualifications. The present European Qualifications Framework[3] (EQF) and European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training[4] (ECVET) provide policy frameworks for such developments. Valuing

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html

[4] http://ec.europa.eu/education/ecvt/index_en.html

the professional development of educationalists in international contexts could support educationalists' vertical and horizontal career progression within education systems. It would also help educationalists who still lack the competencies to identify and acquire them and become full members of international professional education communities. Valuing professional development of educationalists in international contexts could motivate the wider participation of educationalists in the international activities of EU programmes and thereby promote the attractiveness of education professions.

5 Conclusions

This paper argues that today the European Lifelong Learning Programmes offer educationalists new opportunities for professional development outside the educational context in international activities. However, there are challenges not yet fully explored that educationalists may encounter in their new democratic professionalism through participation in international activities. Professional development may take place through participation, social interaction and collaboration in international activities. Educationalists may develop their professionalism through collaborative, progressive inquiry and knowledge advancement. The concept of tacit knowledge can be applied to explain the transformation of the acquired knowledge, skills and competencies by educationalists into new practices and professionalism in local educational contexts. The specific knowledge, skills and competencies that could be acquired in international activities are, for example, communication in foreign languages, digital competencies as well as interpersonal, intercultural and social competencies that are essential for a successful professional life in modern society and that cannot be taught in traditional education. The paper argues that it is important to validate informal learning outcomes and recognise them as formal learning and part of teacher qualifications. Valuing professional development of educationalists in international activities would help the career progression of educationalists and promote the attractiveness of education professions. It could also motivate the wider participation of educationalists in the international activities of education in EU programmes.

This paper has brought new knowledge about the international activities in education in the 21st century and the opportunities and challenges related to professional development in international activities. The topic has not yet been widely studied and further research is needed to explore the research questions in more depth. Further, the lack of empirical data limits the argumentation of the paper. Considering the scale of educationalists' participation in international activities in the current European Lifelong Learning Programme, it would be important to continue research on the professional development of educationalists in European programmes. The research could continue to collect educationalists' insights and perceptions regarding their professional development through participation in international activities of the EU programmes. The research could also study the life stories of educationalists who have participated in international activities and the effect the international dimension has had on their professional development and career progression. At this point, this paper makes an initial attempt to contribute to the discussion of the impact of globalisation and the EU on education and on the professional development of educationalists in European member states.

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'The future ain't what it used to be'. EU Education Policy and the Teacher's Role: Sketching the Political Background of a Paradigm Shift.

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1 Preliminary remarks on the international context of today's education and educational policy. Teaching and Learning between competitiveness, employability and inclusivity.

There is no doubt that the changes in education seen around the world constitute an actual paradigm shift. A state retreat, concerning the *institutional domain and the legitimative function of education*, affects the perception of the teaching and learning process. The econocratic view of policy-making in education and the gradual involvement of interest politics are reshaping education policy making procedures and the redistributive action of education systems (Papadakis & Tsakanika 2006: 289-290), while teaching and learning are gradually becoming (cor)related to employability and competitiveness.

The changing conditions of both

- education (whose teaching is a major determinant); and
- higher education (where teachers' initial education usually takes place[1])

interact with the changing role of both education institutions and higher education institutions, within a new socio-economic and political environment (see Klemencic 2006: A.1.1-3, p. 2).
The major parameters of the abovementioned change and the main crucial policy initiatives that affect education (in general) and higher education are:

[1] As the European Commission points out: '*teacher education and development is a continuum running from initial pre-service education to induction for newly qualified teachers and in-service / continuing professional development*' (EC 2007a: 52).

- the Lisbon Strategy, that gradually (re)contextualises education policy; and
- the Bologna Process (constituted by the two main clusters of issues – structural and social dimension – see Zgaga 2004) and the ongoing implementation of policy agendas shaping the complicated venture for a European higher education area.

In the context of both, the key, mutual dependant, supranational initiatives (namely the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy) along with education and education policies[2] are brought 'not only at the forefront of discourse but also at the edge of political action' (Papadakis & Tsakanika 2006: 167) as the focal point of a two-pillar strategy. The abovementioned strategy aims at ensuring sustainability (see OECD/ IMHE 2003: 1) and promoting both employability and social cohesion within our post-industrial 'risk societies' (in U. Beck's terms). Indeed, any attempt to analyse education and its major determinants (namely learning and teaching) within the Lisbon Agenda cannot overlook the effects of the new forms of internationalisation and the emerging transformations in the economy and the labour market (Lavdas, Papadakis & Gidarakou 2006: 131). All of these changes reflect the *dominant policy rationality within the policy complex*, while the macroeconomic intervention (a transition from 'Keynesianism' to 'monetarism'/cf. Lipietz 1990 and Hirst & Thompson 1996: 74-75), and the articulation of educational policy as active employment policy (cf. Commission of the European Communities 1989: 109, European Commission 2002: 15, Papadakis 2006: 203-235, Hviden 2001) facilitate the macroeconomic over-determination of public policy in education and training (Gravaris & Papadakis 2002, Papadakis & Tsakanika 2005). As Taylor-Gooby points out, changes in the labour market structure have a crucial impact on the articulation of any kind of welfare policy (Taylor-Gooby 2004: 30-32). In the case of education, they redefine its compensatory role and subsequently recontextualise the notion and the extent of inclusion in an era of flexible reskilling and employability.

[2] And the key issues related to them, such as structures, reforms and trends (Eurydice 2003: 11).

2 Teaching and Learning within the new policy paradigm on education

Europeanisation, the supranationalisation of public policies, the predominance of a new economic-developmental paradigm in late modern capitalism and the multicultural challenge of political systems and their civic culture constitute the context of the biggest challenges for education today and subsequently redefine the role of teaching and learning in the education process.

According to a fundamental policy document of the Council of Europe on EDC (Education for Democratic Citizenship):

> '*society has become highly multicultural and diverse and political and economic conditions often shape the learning experience*' (Council of Europe 2004: 41).

In fact, the arising ritual of educational policy (in Popkewitz's terms/ Popkewitz 1982: 5-29), the relevant politics of change (see Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry 1997), and the policy priorities underlying them have reformed education across Europe during the last two decades and keep on influencing both the teaching process and the teaching profession, that are in turn and inevitably becoming more complex and multidimensional than ever.

More specifically, the European Strategy for Employment, the Lisbon Strategy and the EU Member States' employment policies (National Action Plans for Employment) have led to the transformation of education and training structures and methods in the context of 'human resources development', while the new public management and the transformations regarding the public policy complex redefine the priorities of educational policy regarding skills (emphasising the development of soft skills instead of the traditional manpower requirements approach). This major retreat combined with the worldwide emergence of 'diverse' types of moral action, such as the epicurism 'welfarism' (see Sen 1987: 39) and the actual re-negotiation of the 'agency - well being' relationship seem fundamental in policies that ex definitio should be proactive in "enhancing inclusiveness and strengthening citizenship"[3].

[3] Citizenship has historically been conceptualised in different ways (Nikolakaki 2003: 403) since it has evolved from the personal development of the citizen in the polis into

While education is perceived as a domain aiming at promoting employability[4], economic development, flexibility and social cohesion, an obvious question emerges: how is this explicit emphasis on issues of employability and adaptability reflected in the social dimension of teaching and learning, the teacher's social role and responsibility and their inclusive operation, and on the possibilities of education to also act as an inclusive mechanism. This is especially pressing if we consider there is a notable increase in skills-related overall inequality mainly manifested in the domains of employment, wages and the economy in general (see Machin 2004) because of the ongoing technology-driven paradigm shift and the relevant increase in skills expectations (Gallie, 1996: 447-473). Such findings can explain the shift of the discourse on both education and higher education to the importance of learning outcomes[5] (see Reichert & Tauch 2005) in order to make feasible and crystal clear to *'prospective and present students how their skills and*

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subordination to the claims of the nation-state – gradually incorporating the notion of the global citizen. According to the Follow Up Group on EDC of the Council of Europe (2006: 6):

'*Civic education in Europe aims at the development of a large-scale, inclusive and deliberative civic space that captures the democratic imagination of a tolerant and fair European polity. In that regard, citizenship education is part of a diachronical quest for 'the good polity', which in the case of a multicultural and ever-dynamic Europe refers to the means and institutions of bringing about an encompassing 'civic partnership' among distinct historically constituted, culturally defined and politically organised demoi'*.

[4] Let us consider the birth of the Bologna Process itself. As Haug argues:

'*among the factors explaining why there was a change in the agenda for higher education in Europe, the following can be highlighted: first the emergence of a real European labour market, which was bound to shape major elements of the university offering and functioning in the forthcoming years. The Trends 1 report noted that it was unlikely that the combination of a high rate of graduate unemployment and a shortage of qualified young people in key areas in many European countries would be accepted much longer by societies. The growing tension between an increasingly open and European labour market on the one hand, and exclusively national degree systems on the other, is certainly one of the core factors explaining the Bologna process*' (Haug 2006: A.3.1-1, pp. 5-6).

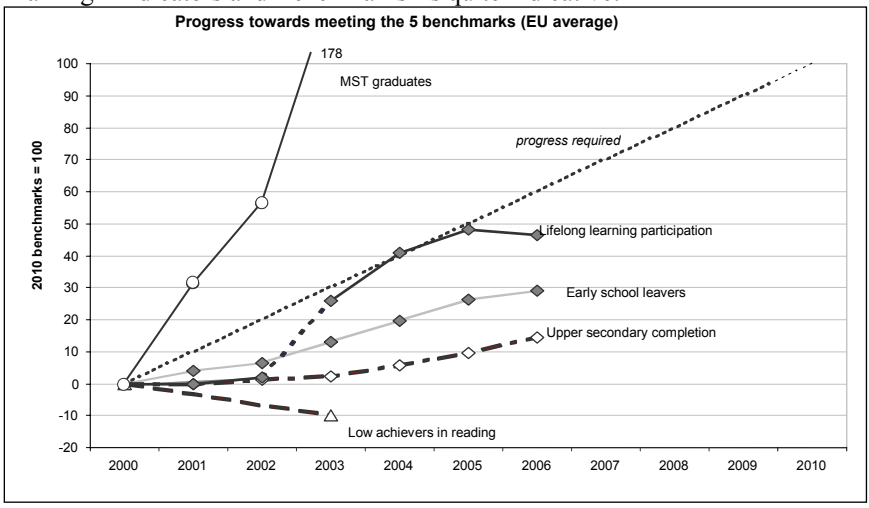
[5] I.e. Tuning Project Phase IV focuses explicitly on learning outcomes (LOs) and competencies as a focal point of the ongoing and planned curricular reforms (see Tuning Project 2006). We should hence take into consideration that the manifested 'shift to a learning outcomes perspective in education and training policies and practices' is linked to the development of the European Qualification Framework (EC 2007: Ch 7.2.2. viii).

knowledge acquired through the study are intended to be of use in their career development' (UK QAA: URL).

Nevertheless, what is not exactly clear is how this explicit emphasis on employability, effectiveness and competitiveness (namely issues over-determined by the macro-economic agenda) is reflected in the social dimension of education and the substance of its major operational parameters of teaching and learning. As Felicity Armstrong argues, '*(issues of inclusion/exclusion in general) are inseparable from issues relating to inclusion and exclusion in education which are about local, national and global policy developments relating to social and economic change, as well as about the making of education policies*' (Felicity Armstrong 2003: 1).

Summing up the progress made in both the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Agenda[6], an unquestionable conclusion can be drawn, namely, the objective of the competitiveness, employability, adaptability and attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area is located at the centre of every policy agenda promoted. The European Employment Strategy and the Lisbon Agenda raise the issue of skills linked with the development of qualification frameworks (European Commission 2002: 20). Simultaneously, the venture leading towards the European Higher Education Area is gradually related to the guidelines set by the Lisbon

[6] Regarding the progress in the five benchmark areas, the recent 2007 Commission Staff Working Paper on the 'Progress Towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training - Indicators and Benchmarks' is quite indicative:



Source: European Commission 2007 (Statistical Annex)

Agenda, while the social dimension is integrated as a peripheral objective, strategically related to '*economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*' (European Council 2000: 2). Within this context, the social dimension and inclusivity through teaching and learning are still an issue raised by both supranational structures, Member States and several interest groups, but are far from being a key priority. On the other hand, due to this ongoing redefinition of the operational determinants of teaching and learning, they are both becoming a policy priority themselves.

3 Policy questions and stakes regarding the teacher's role within a changing context

Within such a highly modified context (Wallace 1997), the role of teachers is gradually gaining in visibility. On 24 May 2005, the Council's Conclusion on new indicators in education and training invited the Commission to 'cooperate *with international organisations in order to satisfy the information needs of the EU in indicator areas such as ICT, adult skills and* ***professional development of teachers'*** (European Council 2005). Following up on that invitation, the European Commission 'invited experts from the Member States and Candidate Countries to conclude on the scope and content of EU data needs on the professional development of teachers' (EC 2007c: 1) and subsequently proceeded in:

- using effectively OECD's TALIS survey 'Teachers, Teaching and Learning'; and
- establishing a new key indicator on 'Teachers' Professional Development' (indicator 6E – see Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks 2007).

In addition, an attempt to draw up a set of Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications took place in 2005, ending in the European Commission's Communication 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education' that was adopted in August 2007. This Communication argues for the better regulation, co-ordination and funding of teacher education and development at the national level, the enhancement of the reflecting substance of the teaching profession (in order to reflect the diversity of society etc), the need for teacher education programmes to be available in the Bachelor, Master and

Doctorate cycles of higher education everywhere in Europe and the development of systems '*that ensure that at every point in their career, teachers have the full range of subject knowledge, attitudes and pedagogic skills to be able to help young people to reach their full potential and are able to take charge of their own learning pathways and to develop new knowledge about education and training through reflective practice*' (EC 2007: 53).

Such a set of policy objectives and priorities reflects the state of play regarding teachers' education and profession, while coping with the relevant deficits reported by the Member States: shortfalls in teaching skills and difficulties in updating teachers' skills, the high percentage of older workers within the teaching profession, the lack of systematic co-ordination, coherence and continuity mainly between initial education and subsequent in-service training and professional development, the limited amount of in-service training available to practising teachers[7] and deficits in many countries concerning the support services provided to teachers in their first years of teaching (see EC 2007: 52-53).

Of course, (despite its obvious influence) a Communication is not enough to cope effectively with such a range of remarkable deficiencies. Several policy initiatives and reforms have recently been reported by the Member States. According to the European Commission's recent Cross Country Analysis, '*reforms of initial teacher education have been undertaken in several countries* (BE nl, BG, CY, DK, ES, FR, IE, IS, LI, MT, SI, UK), *(including) changes that range from a major reform of initial teacher training in Belgium, nl (focusing on more effective practice during initial training and better mentoring during the induction period) to an increase from three to five years of the education of teachers at the pre-primary and compulsory stages in Iceland, to introduction of short-term and long-term qualification courses in new educational contents in innovative training methods and multicultural environment in Bulgaria*' (EC 2007: 53). At the same time, reforms and changes

- related with teachers' continuing training, qualification improvement, professional development and
- reflecting major shifts in educational curricula and subsequent needs in teaching methods and skills

are underway in many Member States (according their national reports on progress towards the Lisbon objectives).

[7] It is '*compulsory in only eleven Member States….while the fact that in-service training may be compulsory says little about actual participation rates*' (EC 2007: 52).

In addition, the EC Cluster on 'Teachers and Trainers' (operating within the Work Programme 'Education & Training 2010') recently identified the key policy conditions for: '(a) the successful development of a school as a learning community; (b) the recruitment and development of school leaders; and (c) the establishment of effective partnerships between schools and companies….' (EC 2007: Ch. 7.2.2. ii), while seeking best practices regarding teachers' motivation concerning their continuing professional development, teachers' preparation to teach effectively in multicultural settings and the development of effective relationships between teacher education institutions and schools (European Commission 2007b: 1-2).

It is crystal clear that the more complicated and demanding the teaching & learning process becomes, the broader are the institutional and operational issues (related to the teaching profession) that are raised.

4 The Teacher's Role Restated, the Teaching Profession Redefined? Instead of a Conclusion

Deficits to cope with, new demands to satisfy, diversity to preserve, convergences to support and diverse (even controversial and contradictory) expectations to fulfil – these are probably the main emerging challenges for the teaching profession and the teacher's role within the gradually changing educational landscape. Within this context, teaching and learning face an inevitable challenge of preserving their inclusive role and promoting the broader meaning of learning without losing momentum.

Can this ever be feasible in a rapidly changing 'environment'?

In response to this question our brief, contextually embedded perspective can just rely on a quote from Yogi Berra: '*the future ain't what it used to be*'. And such a future cannot stand mono-logical answers to multidimensional questions….

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Developing Teacher Education Policies through Peer Learning

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The context of peer learning on teacher education policies: Education & Training 2010

In the year 2000 the Council of the European Union announced its ambition to become 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion'.

To achieve this ambitious goal, it is necessary to invest in the quality of education. Therefore, in 2001 the Council identified concrete future objectives of education and training systems (European Council, 2001). As part of these objectives, three major goals were emphasised:

- to improve the quality and effectiveness of EU education and training systems;
- to ensure that they are accessible to all; and
- to open up education and training to the wider world.

To realise these goals, ministers of education of EU member states agreed on the detailed work programme Education & Training 2010 with 13 specific objectives (European Council, 2002). Education systems in the member states have to improve in a variety of areas: teacher quality and teacher education; basic skills; integration of Information and Communication Technologies; efficiency of investments; language learning; lifelong guidance; flexibility of the systems to make learning accessible to all, mobility, citizenship education etc.

Concerning teachers and teacher training, the work programme identifies four key issues:

1 identifying the skills that teachers and trainers should have, given their changing roles in the knowledge society;

2 providing the conditions which adequately support teachers and trainers as they respond to the challenges of the knowledge society, including through initial and in-service training in the perspective of lifelong learning;
3 securing a sufficient level of entry to the teaching profession, across all subjects and levels, as well as providing for the long-term needs of the profession by making teaching and training even more attractive; and
4 attracting recruits to teaching and training who have professional experience in other fields.

The open method of co-ordination

Although the European Union's ambitions with respect to education are high, the authority of the European Council with respect to education is limited as it has no legislative authority in the field of education. Therefore, realisation of the Education & Training 2010 work programme lies in the hands of individual member states. However, the European Council and the European Commission still have a number of policy tools to support the work programme. These tools form part of the so-called 'open method of co-ordination'.

The Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) is a way of co-ordinating and stimulating policy development at national levels. The OMC starts by defining shared goals and timetables for reaching these goals, followed by a definition of qualitative and quantitative indicators and benchmarks, the development of national policy plans with targets, sharing of national experiences through peer learning and peer review and finally periodic monitoring and evaluation, both on the national and European levels (Presidency Conclusions, point 37, European Council, Lisbon 23-24 March 2000).

The OMC is seen as a soft law mechanism based on the voluntary co-operation of the member states since no sanctions are involved.

The OMC has several characteristics:

- normative: a normative framework is created by setting specific targets and by defining indicators that can be used as benchmarks;

- oriented to mutual learning: mutual learning is stimulated through an exchange of policy examples and good and bad experiences and through the shared discussion of existing dilemmas;
- competitive: through benchmarks and rankings, member states tend to compare their performance with the performances of other member states. No country wants to end up at the end of a ranking list. On the other hand, (economic) competitiveness between member states can frustrate processes of peer learning when countries are reluctant to share their policy practices in order to protect their leading position; and
- quantitative: to develop effective benchmarks and monitor instruments, indicators need to focus on clearly defined and easy to measure quantitative outcomes.

Within the Education & Training 2010 work programme, the Open Method of Co-ordination is used as the main instrument for policy development.

In the work programme the goals, timetable and indicators are defined; through benchmarks the development of these indicators is monitored and evaluated on a two yearly base (see, for example, European Commission, 2004) and peer learning between member states is stimulated through peer learning activities focusing on specific topics within the overall Education & Training 2010 work programme.

Policy development through Peer Learning

Within the context of the Education & Training 2010 work programme, peer learning is a process of co-operation at a European level whereby both policy-makers and practitioners from one country learn, through direct contact and practical co-operation, from the experiences of their counterparts elsewhere in Europe in implementing reforms in areas of shared interest and concern. Around some of the objectives of the work programme, the Commission has created Clusters of representatives from member states that are interested in that specific theme. A Cluster consists of representatives from countries that have an interest in that specific objective and have expressed a desire to learn from other interested countries, or to share with others their successful or

unsuccessful experiences. This peer learning is facilitated by peer learning activities (PLAs), thematic working conferences where specific policy issues are discussed through presentations of policy examples from the host country and other countries. Visits to relevant locations which give an insight into the particular policy theme are often part of those working conferences.

The aims of the peer learning activities are (European Commission, 2006):

- to develop a common understanding of success factors for the improvement of policy-making and the implementation of reform;
- to identify and disseminate key conclusions which can be fed into policy-making and implementation at the national level and European level.

In general, PLAs are small scale working sessions of four days with two representatives from each Cluster country that decides to join that specific PLA: one represents the policy level, who should be able to address the critical factors for policy development, and one is from the operational level, who is expected to address the critical factors for implementation.

During the Cluster meetings the PLAs are prepared, the outcomes are discussed and the impact of PLAs on national policy making is shared.

Summary of the five PLAs

Within the Cluster Teachers & Trainers, 21 countries are represented[1]. The cluster started in April 2005 and five peer learning activities have been organised[2]:

The selection of the topics for the PLAs was based on their relevance for the participating countries and on the willingness of a host country to organise a PLA on that specific topic.

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[1] AT, BE (Fr), BE(NL), CR, CZ, CY, DK, ES, EST, FR, GE, FI, IC, IR, IT, NL, NO, RO, SL, SW, TU

[2] The reports of the peer learning activities can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/objectives_en.html#training

Continuous Professional Development for Teachers and Trainers

The first PLA of the Cluster 'Teachers and Trainers' was held in Dublin, 26- 29 September 2005 and focused on the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of teachers and trainers in the context of lifelong learning.

Starting from the question of how to improve the quality of teachers in general, participants at the PLA wanted among other things to concentrate on the following policy related issues:

- existing reform options in the Irish system for CPD;
- creating a genuine continuum through initial teacher education, induction and CPD; and
- facilitating schools to support and empower their staff in the process of lifelong learning and teachers to take greater ownership and responsibility in this endeavour.

The idea of the presented action research project 'Teaching and Learning for the Twenty First Century' (TL21), and the second national project 'Leadership Development for Schools' (LDS) as well, get to the heart of improving classroom teaching, challenging teacher learning by support based on clear vision within the education system. They were linked to induction, subject-based in-service training, mentorship training and qualifications reforms.

Among the PLA participants, there was consensus that the policy examples presented, of collaborative teacher learning in co-operation with initial research-based actions tend to raise teachers' engagement and personal involvement in becoming aware of their personal needs for further professional development. Reflecting their individual progress at that stage of professional learning also raises their awareness for learner-oriented teaching and re-empowers them to intensify their responses to the different learner typologies of their students. Attempting to equip future school leaders with management skills as well as the confidence and competence to support change and advance further staff development on one hand and to assist school management to develop positive leadership roles to support teachers in managing their individual change on the other, seemed to promote the idea of a learning community for all groups involved, pupils as well as teachers.

One main policy issue in the final discussion of the PLA referred to the period of induction for novice teachers supported by experienced teachers as mentors. Induction programmes were also understood as highly supportive for teachers re-entering the profession after years, for those changing schools and of course for newly appointed school-leaders. Despite the different national approaches (centralised or de-centralised systems) participants of the PLA found an appropriate balance to meet their own requirements or policy innovation. As it was the first experience of the Cluster T&T with a PLA, several process related issues within a PLA were discussed for consideration in further PLA planning.

Schools as Learning Communities for their Teachers (The Netherlands, May 2006)

In the concluding discussion and reflection on the PLA in Dublin, it had become obvious how the awareness for schools to define themselves as learning organisations can have a decisive effect on teachers' encouragement and motivation to fully engage in their personal professional development. All members of the Cluster agreed that on the way to the learning and knowledge society, school staff need support to review their own learning culture, while at the same time policy-makers, supervision boards and school leaders should question themselves on how they motivate teachers for their own learning and further development.

Teachers themselves should increasingly focus on their individual needs, aligning them to their personal professional self-concept and perceiving them in the context of school development in a collaborative creative process.

Consequently the Dutch model of 'Schools as Learning Communities for their Teachers' was a challenging and exciting topic for a follow-up PLA. During the regular four days of the activity the participants in the peer learning activity had the chance to visit schools that were experienced as learning environments. Further inspiration for the discussions between the participants was provided through presentations from different stakeholders (the Ministry, the Inspectorate, school leaders, teacher educators and student teachers). Pupils, teachers and school leaders presented a wide range of issues and many more were stimulated by questions of PLA participants.

While the country representatives had their own vision of how the development of learning communities could be promoted in their national systemic and policy contexts, the group gradually began to consider possible common implications of this concept throughout Europe. Despite the differences in teaching and training approaches in the member states and the national traditions of responsibilities, steering strategies and other preconditions, there was high level of agreement that the examples of learning schools are apt to make an important contribution to school improvement, to the development of new expertise for teachers and their own learning, and bring a great benefit for the individual pupil who experiences learning teachers as positive role models in lifelong learning.

The following issues were especially pointed out as relevant for national and European policy:

- it is more effective for teachers' professional development if there are systematic opportunities with conditions that allow change to happen with all partners involved;
- highly prescribed CPD programmes, that do not take the individual development needs or the local circumstances and the participating actors into account are not likely to succeed;
- irrespective of the different approaches like autonomy, centralisation, de-centralisation and shared responsibilities among teacher education institutions, all partners in the school sector should value highly the establishment of a new learning culture and encourage teachers accordingly; and
- by following the vision of improving pupils' performances and results by means of improving the quality of teachers' professional development, the Dutch approach was perceived as a highly stimulating and inspiring future concept.

Along with parallel policy examples from Cyprus and Turkey, the PLA allowed for a deep analysis of contrasting experiences enabling participants to reflect their national systems.

Partnership between Schools for Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Companies (Austria, March 2007)

The main goal of the PLA was that the participants should learn about and exchange the different ways in which partnerships between schools

and companies are managed, developed and supported in different countries, and how these contribute to the overall quality of their VET system. A special focus was put on teachers and trainers as the main linking pins between the school world and the world of work at the provider level.

A number of countries have school-based systems where practical training in companies is an obligatory component, like the 'sandwich model' of Iceland, the obligatory work experience in the different Irish programmes or the practical, contract-based training in companies in Estonia and Slovenia. In a number of countries (Portugal, Italy and the Netherlands), both school- and company-based systems coexist, in some cases sharing the same target groups, learning objectives, and certifications.

While the majority of countries state that the country has either adopted or is working towards a competence-based approach, closer scrutiny showed that 'competence-based' seems to have been interpreted quite differently.

In most of the participating countries VET schools employ both academics and people with a professional background. There appeared to be large differences between countries concerning the organisation of company-based training and the roles and qualifications of company trainers. A few countries have no concepts of company-based trainers. The formal requirements for trainers' qualifications appeared very varied. The extreme points were Germany, where trainers – besides a vocational qualification – are required to follow a course of 120 hours and pass an examination; and Italy, where enterprise tutors have to attend a compulsory training course of at least 8 hours.

The main challenges that VET teachers and trainers face at the moment are the recruitment of teachers, the need for new competence requirements for teachers, the possibility for the competence development of teachers and trainers and the definition of standards at the national level to ensure the quality of training.

The partnership between the world of school and the world of work seemed quite institutionalised at national or regional levels; however, co-operation at the school-company level largely depended on a school's

initiative. The crucial challenge from the policy perspective was to bring teachers and trainers closer together.

Preparing Teachers to Teach Effectively in Culturally Diverse Settings (Norway, May 2007)

The experience of a changing school population and an increasing number of pupils with a migration background has become a great challenge for some countries, while others are relatively experienced and have a long tradition with intercultural models and inclusive teaching approaches in the context of minority groups in their society. Yet, in most countries teachers obviously do not feel adequately prepared to teach in culturally diverse settings. The PLA was conducted in Norway as one of the countries with interesting policy examples and a national institution that acts as bridge between policy-makers, researchers and schools. This National Centre for Multicultural Education (NAFO) offers assistance in issues like raising awareness, development of intercultural competence, networking and the dissemination of good practice examples.

Again in this peer learning activity the vital role of school leaders was noted by the participants and especially the need for a range of extra competencies when leading a multicultural learning community. The participants in the PLA had the possibility to visit different school settings and concluded that decision-making regarding culturally diverse schools needs policy-makers who are aware of the sensitivities in the field of cultural diversity and their societal implications with respect to social partners, parents' associations and others. A very personal discussion with a mother involved in the parents' work in this context deeply impressed the participants. There was a great consensus that all teachers have to be prepared already in their initial phase of education. In this phase, student teachers need to be confronted with the latest research results in the area of stereotyping and discrimination as well as gain background knowledge about the countries the migrant families come from. The correlation of school success and the awareness of acceptance or lack of acceptance in society has been an object for research especially in the Netherlands in the field of teaching languages to children with a migration background.

Another impressive policy example from the initial stage of teacher education in the Netherlands was the model of a teaching practicum

abroad (without a Dutch mentor) for a large number of student teachers in countries like Turkey, African countries and others, enabling students to become familiar with the cultural background of their pupils and experiencing some of the basic problems of living and working in a different cultural content, while at the same time examining or reassessing their attitudes towards different cultures.

In the reflecting discussion, the participants concluded that teacher educators themselves should have specific competencies in these issues and should strongly enhance research with closer contact to daily teaching in such classroom settings. Further, they should be willing and able to support student teachers in developing their competencies to deal appropriately with prejudice at school and to develop interpersonal and social skills like empathy and cultural sensitivity in communicating with pupils and parents. Student teachers, irrespective of their future level of teaching, should be offered the chance of a teaching practicum in a multicultural setting during their initial teacher education. Such core knowledge and intercultural skills are regarded as a minimum standard for future teachers and those already at school should have the chance to develop further competencies in the context of CPD.

Relationships between Teacher Education Institutes and Schools (Denmark/Sweden, October 2007)

In all the preceding PLAs participants continually engaged in parallel discussions on the co-operation of the actors involved or even institutionalised partnerships between parties in the field under discussion.

It was obvious that specific projects could be more successful and effective if the parties involved, especially teacher education institutions and schools (including CPD), were able to bring to life strategic partnerships to bridge the gap often experienced between 'theory' and 'practice' and to take advantage of the fruitful contributions that each party can make to the other.

As a number of member states were interested in exploring such approaches, Denmark offered to host a PLA to review and discuss existing policy and to contrast these models with further examples from Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands.

The view that schools should play a central and active role in developing teaching methodology was shared in all models and by all participants. Partnerships between teacher education institutions and schools can contribute to the development of new knowledge about learning (learning to learn) and consequently to the design of teaching approaches that respond to learner typology, leading to curriculum improvements in both schools and teacher education. To enhance the benefits for both partners, the partnership should not only focus on the education of student teachers, but also on the professional development of staff within schools, on curriculum innovation and on shared research (as in the Swedish 'Think Tanks').

While in some countries regional partnerships are already functioning effectively (for example the system in Finland in which special teacher training schools are connected with universities) others are in the process of developing such support systems to meet the ambitions described above.

The participants in the PLA strongly supported the vision that in the future all schools should be able to benefit from partnership systems and the outcomes of partnerships within a national system. The quality of the outcomes and the effectiveness of the partnership in the light of its objectives should be externally evaluated and the conclusions should be disseminated.

In the creation of such partnership models, especially in providing the necessary conditions for this endeavour, the participants in the PLA identified a strong role for educational policy-makers at the national and regional level to undertake intentional steering. Essential conditions for effective partnerships are: resources for the long-term sustainability of partnerships, formally binding frameworks (e.g. by connecting these frameworks to accreditation criteria) with a focus on quality criteria and assurance, and flexibility to adapt the partnership to local conditions and contexts.

Common themes

An analysis of the reports from the four PLAs shows that several common issues arose in more than one PLA[3]. These issues seem to be relevant for most member states in their policy development and for their further development.

1 The theme of **teachers' lifelong learning** came up in all of the PLAs. The importance of lifelong learning for the teaching and training professions continues to be an important policy issue in driving up standards of teaching and learning in order to enhance pupils' and students' achievements. Through this, national governments recognise that initial teacher education can never be sufficient to prepare for the range of contexts and developments which teachers are set to experience and recognise the need to prepare and up-skill teachers for the emerging knowledge society and economy and to modernise working practices.

   To support teachers' lifelong learning, two important structures have been suggested:

   a. The importance of competencies and standards: Establishing and clarifying what should be expected from teachers has become a widespread policy goal. In many countries, the role of these competencies and standards is restricted to the area of initial teacher education, clarifying what a beginning teacher should be able to do. During the PLAs the importance of competencies and standards that play a role during the whole of the teaching career was emphasised. Such a framework can stimulate the ongoing professional development and lifelong learning of teachers.
   b. The need for systems that support teachers' lifelong learning: the need to encourage and support teachers' lifelong learning has underpinned much of the policy debate in member states. During the PLAs, participants noted that although the training policy approaches differed in terms of location (school-based or training centres), responsibility (individual schools or a central ministry), and focus (on delivering the

[3] In this analysis, an interim report on the work of the cluster from October 2005 to November 2006 was used (Brumfitt, 2006).

curriculum, on managing pupil behaviour or on teaching and learning), the underlying policy need to support serving teachers was constant.

2 **Ownership, self-esteem and self-accountability of teachers** were seen as important preconditions for both raising the attractiveness of the teaching profession and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The teaching profession should be seen as a profession with extended professionalism (Hoyle, 1975). Professionals in education should play an important part in the design and innovation of curricula and learning environments for their pupils. Quality awareness and quality control by teachers and an attitude of self-accountability towards external stakeholders should be stimulated.
Policy measures should respect and support this ownership by teachers.

3 **Leadership** was mentioned in all the PLAs. The role of the head of the school in creating conditions for quality improvement, innovation and peer learning was recognised by all PLA participants. Underlying this process has been the view that school improvement is best brought about by concentrating development efforts at the school level and seeing the school as the major unit of change in the education system. Associated with this trend is the recognition that leadership and management need to be redefined and that a clearer shift away is needed from the traditional hierarchical control mechanisms toward a culture of shared leadership.
As a result, attracting, training and retaining high quality school leaders is an important issue in policy-making within member states.
In the discussion, attention was drawn to leadership which moves away from a purely authoritative style of administration to a more collaborative style of management and distributed leadership. This requires teachers who have leadership qualities and are willing to become actors and equal partners in a change of culture and philosophy in schools today.

4 Many of the policy examples that were seen as promising policy approaches involved **partnerships between schools and teacher**

education institutions. Such partnerships not only focused on the education of new teachers. Such partnerships, integrated initial teacher education, continuous professional development, curriculum innovation, school improvement and knowledge development through research. The potential benefits of partnerships between schools and teacher education institutions are increased when the benefits of all participants (student teachers, schools, teacher education institutions and the system) are taken into account and when there is flexibility in the specific design of the partnership, leaving room for adaptation to local needs and conditions.

5 During several PLAs the concept of '**trust**' was mentioned. Transferring responsibilities to schools and teachers involves the transfer of trust. When school systems are dominated by control mechanisms, defensive attitudes might prevail, frustrating entrepreneurship within schools. The creation of an environment of trust allows school leaders and teachers to be confident that mistakes are part of the learning process, encourages more risk-taking with further 'trial and error' and therefore more innovative approaches.
Trust needs to be developed on different levels: trust between ministries and schools, between teachers and school leaders, between teachers (schools) and parents and between schools and teacher education institutions.
Trust can have different manifestations and should not only be based on formal contracts but also on the relation and intentions of the participants involved (Byrk & Schneider, 2002).
Policy measures should explicitly be evaluated on the extent to which they stimulate or frustrate trust between stakeholders within the education system.

6 To stimulate new policies and approaches it could be helpful to facilitate small-scale projects. However, as the quality of teachers and teacher education is important for the whole of the education system, attention should be paid to questions of how to **stimulate, support and resource the whole of the education system**. The allocation of time, effort and resources is needed to develop professional qualities through lifelong learning, to create learning communities within schools and to establish effective

partnerships.

The sources of finance can vary depending on the national structures, resources and possibilities; they can be institutional (by changing priorities), regional (e.g. through local authorities), national (e.g. by project funding) or international (e.g. through the EU Lifelong Learning Programme). Financial support should always take the need for long-term sustainability into account.

These common issues were considered important for developing and improving policies in all member states involved. The discussions considered both the strategic role of a central education ministry and the level of operational detail that was managed by centrally based officials or was left up to the autonomy of the school. There was a consensus that the level of centralisation was not the most significant aspect in establishing and maintaining an effective education system. Far more important was ensuring a common understanding of how the system works, how roles and responsibilities are assigned, how progress and developments are monitored, and how each part of the system is held accountable for its performance. The level of regulation and deregulation should not only be seen as a deliberate policy measure to improve educational attainment and school performance, but has also to be regarded as the result of tradition and culture.

Benefits of peer learning

The concept of peer learning within the context of the European Union is relatively new. Within the Teachers & Trainers Cluster the participants have developed their own way of working based on the general outline of the European Commission.

The question is whether this way of working has been effective with respect to its aims:

- to develop a common understanding of success factors for the improvement of policy-making and the implementation of reform; and
- to identify and disseminate key conclusions which can be fed into policy-making and implementation at the national and European levels.

In all the PLA reports and evaluations, peer learning activities are considered as an effective way of exchanging policy practices and to discuss underlying policy questions. The reports that result from each PLA summarise the common trends and conclusions, making the common understanding explicit. This has led to an ideational convergence, a convergence at the level of ideas. This means 'that policy-makers converge in their assessment of causal mechanisms at work in policy areas, definitions of desirable and unacceptable policies, and beliefs about how policies work' (Radaelli, 2003).

Both at the end of the PLAs and at the Cluster meetings, participants reported individual insights or findings that they could report and bring back into their own national systems. This indicates that the participants were able to identify key conclusions on the national level.

Key conclusions that are fed into policy-making and implementation on the European level are more difficult to identify. A clear and explicit mechanism for reporting and implementing outcomes on the European level is missing as a result of the limited authority of the European Council with respect to education. However, themes and recommendations discussed during the PLAs can be recognised in the communication of the European Commission on improving the quality of teacher education (European Commission, 2007) and the Council's conclusions on teacher education (European Council, 2007). More implicit mechanisms for transferring the PLA outcomes to the EU policy level can also be found:

- The Cluster is seen as an important European platform for policy development in the area of teacher education, as can be seen in the invitation for the EU conference 'Teacher professional development for the quality and equity of lifelong learning' organised by the Portuguese Presidency in September 2007.
- A number of Cluster members are also members of the European Network on Teacher Education Policy (ENTEP). This combined membership stimulates the mutual exchange of conclusions and recommendations on a wider scale.
- The Cluster is supported by the European Commission. The Commission's representative feeds the outcomes of the PLAs towards the Commission and to the Education and Training Co-ordination Group, consisting of representatives of member states

and responsible for the overall co-ordination of the Education & Training 2010 work programme.

The peer learning format that has been used by the Teachers & Trainers Cluster differs in several aspects from more traditional conferences or study visits:

- The PLAs have a unique combination of senior policy officials, academics and practitioners. Policy development is thereby enriched by the outcomes of research and academic discourse and by the evaluation of the possible effects of the implementation of policy measures in the reality of practice in schools and teacher education. At the same time, academics are challenged to apply research outcomes and theories to the reality and limitations of policy-making. This interactive and heterogeneous context creates a powerful learning environment that is valued by the participants.
- Despite the fact that the starting point of most PLAs is a specific policy practice in the host country, the PLAs extend to underlying policy issues that are relevant to all countries. Therefore, the PLA is more than a study visit or peer review and leads to common conclusions and recommendations that have wider relevance for all member states.
- Starting with the exchange of existing policy practices in the host country and in other countries, the aim is not to identify 'best practices' but 'next practices', policy practices that take into account current trends and developments and that are necessary to support schools in the 21st century.

Dilemmas in peer learning

Although the benefits of peer learning within the Teachers & Trainers Cluster are described above, the effectiveness of this peer learning can be questioned at the same time.

The aim of the peer learning methodology is to stimulate policy learning within the member states. The effectiveness of peer learning should become visible in new policy approaches within member states. However, clear structures to evaluate the effectiveness of the PLAs are

missing. There is no systematic follow-up process gauging the impact the PLAs have on the development of national policies.

Not only are evaluation structures missing, but so too are support systems to help PLA participants to extend the learning benefits of individual participants to other stakeholders on the national or local level. The implicit expectation is that the (two) participants are able to transfer the growth of their personal understanding of the policy issue discussed during the PLA to a wider audience of policy-makers, so as to extend personal peer learning to national peer learning.

This problem already starts at the level of the PLA participants and the Cluster. Not all Cluster members take part in each PLA. Although the PLA reports try to highlight the common understanding reached during a PLA, the learning impact differs considerably for those that took part in the PLA and those cluster members that could not participate in the PLA and who can only experience second-hand information through the PLA report.

The same problem arises again when participants in the PLAs have to report back in their national or local context and to feed their personal learning experiences into national policy processes. The question arises of how authentic experiences can be shared.

At least four mechanisms for this transfer problem can be found. First, there is the problem of a missing learning environment. The PLAs are evaluated as effective learning environments for the participants. While feeding back the outcomes of the PLAs to other policy-makers at the local, national or cluster level, this learning environment is missing. Second, the eagerness of national governments to learn from other countries varies. Although not supported by clear evidence, we have the impression that new member countries are more eager to use the outcomes of the PLAs to improve their policy-making. Third, the impact of PLAs on national policy-making also seems to be influenced by the size of ministries or departments and by the status of the particular PLA participant. Finally, the effectiveness of a transfer is influenced by the underestimation of learning within a political context. During the PLAs the participants have the freedom to open up to new ideas and approaches. However, 'learning in the context of the OMC is a political exercise. Policy-makers are not seeking truth, but power. They may be

open to reasoned argumentation, but not to the point of overcoming the basic fact that they are engaged with politically-sensitive policies' (Radaelli, 2003). When PLA participants return home to their ministries, they face colleagues who are focussed on the limitations of the national political preoccupations.

Both the politically sensitive aspects of peer learning and the problems of effective transfer of learning benefits have received little attention within the Cluster.

Another problem is the involvement of other stakeholders in the peer learning process. 'Participation is essential for two reasons. One is obvious, that is, legitimacy. The other is less obvious: effectiveness. The method can work like a radar searching solutions only if it involves many different actors. Accordingly, participation should not be limited to those who operate in EU-level committees, but it should be extended to local-level actors' (Radaelli, 2003). This problem is also recognised by the European Commission as it formulates the ambition to find ways to increase 'the involvement of the broader education and training community, without diluting the existing exchanges between the Commission and Member States' (European Commission, 2007b).

Finally, from the list of PLAs it becomes clear that the PLAs have been hosted by countries in the north-west of Europe. Also policy examples have mainly come from those countries. As a result, there is no balance in the peer learning process. This imbalance has been addressed several times, by inviting countries from the east and south of Europe to host a PLA. However, those countries seem to be reluctant to offer to host a PLA. The reason behind this is still unclear; the reluctance could be connected to the fear of not being able to provide good or best policy practice or to the fact that hosting a PLA is a time-consuming activity for ministries which are overloaded with policy innovations. Both assumptions point to a noticeable imbalance between countries in different parts of Europe.

Finally

The peer learning method is just one of several activities of the open method of co-ordination. It seems to be an essential part of the OMC as it supports member states in achieving the goals of the Education &

Training 2010 work programme, although only few representatives can take part. Benchmarks can be useful in showing progress regarding those goals, but show no insight as to 'how to improve', yield no deeper understanding, and do not contribute to problem-solving. It is the process of exchange and discussion of policy practices which gives an insight into the 'how to' question, thus contributing to improvement.

The shared ambition of Education & Training 2010 needs to be connected to shared learning. The challenge of the Cluster is to feed the learning outcomes of the PLAs into local and national policy-making and to extend peer learning beyond the boundaries of ministries by involving other national and local stakeholders like schools and teacher education institutions.

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Employability of Swedish Student Teacher Alumni

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Introduction

In the early 2000s 'employability' has become an increasingly central concept in higher education. In Europe it constitutes an important aspect of the Bologna Process, which Sweden joined on 1 July 2007. This paper is based on a project on 'Teachers' employability' carried out at Umeå University, one of the major providers of teacher education in Sweden (Figure 1). The aim of the project, carried out in 2007 and set to be finally reported in April 2008, is to examine the situation of student teachers who have graduated from this university and the perceptions of the primary employers – school leaders – on their employability.

For this purpose, quantitative and qualitative data were collected from national statistics, questionnaires and interviews. Broad and deep data, organised in an individual longitudinal database called ASTRID were used to examine the relationships between education, mobility and position in the labour market for former students who graduated in 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2001.

Figure 1. Umeå University's geographical location

Perceived effects of the new national 2001 teacher education programme, and the employability of recently graduated teachers, were studied by questionnaires and interviews targeted at school leaders. Further, and with the aim to explore and distinguish between perceived effects on the employability of different categories of graduate teachers and who conducted their studies within former and current teacher education programmes, questionnaires were directed to former students who graduated in 2001 and 2006. These two sets of studies were carried out between April and September 2007.

This paper reports findings from the ongoing project, focusing on: 1) the employment situation, income development and mobility patterns of recent alumni who graduated in 2000; and 2) the views of school leaders on the quality and usefulness of the current 2001 teacher education curriculum, i.e., its impact on the employability of graduate students.

Longitudinal follow-up of student teachers who graduated in 2000

In this section, the graduate student teachers' employment status, income development and mobility patterns after graduation are presented. Using the longitudinal individual database ASTRID, the situation for student teachers who graduated from Umeå University 2000 was followed up until 2005, which is as long as the ASTRID database presently allows. The ASTRID database is maintained by the Department of Social and Economic Geography at Umeå University. Its main asset is individual register data from Statistics Sweden (SCB). The database covers the Swedish population in the 1985-2005 period in considerable detail, e.g., with respect to geographical location, education level, employment status and incomes.

Using the ASTRID database, 555 student teachers who graduated in 2000 were identified. This constitutes most, if not exactly all, the student teachers who graduated from Umeå University in that particular year. The majority, namely 79%, were women. The average age at graduation was 32 years, while the median age was slightly lower at 28 years. Concerning the place of origin, 68% were born in northern Sweden (of whom 32% in Västerbotten, the county where Umeå University is located) (cf. Figure 1). Of the remaining 32%, 4% were born in a country other than Sweden.

In using the ASTRID database to examine the graduate student teachers' subsequent employability three different definitions of the concept were utilised. In the first, most general definition, employability is defined as having a work-based income that exceeds social benefits and other non-work related income. However, such employment may consist of tasks that to varying degrees are related to the occupation the concerned graduate student is educated for. Therefore, a second definition is employed based on the first definition but limited to teaching duties of some kind. The third, most precise definition also requires employment according to the first definition, but with teaching duties more closely matching the particular education. The evaluation of employability according to the second and third definitions is based on the Swedish Standard Classification of Occupations (SSYK). The lack of highly detailed work descriptions in this classification means that the third

definition should be understood as, for instance, a gymnasium teacher who works as a gymnasium teacher even if they are wholly or partly teaching the 'wrong' subjects. In addition to the occupational group classification, a modified version of the Swedish Standard Industrial Classification (SNI) was utilised to examine at which kinds of workplaces the alumni are employed.

Mobility, employability and incomes after graduation

Higher education and employment are related to migration in many different ways. Compared to other groups, individuals with a university education exhibit a comparatively high rate of migration (Malmberg, Sandberg & Westin, 2005). In many cases, graduation from a university college or university is more or less directly followed by migration from the place of study. Although recent studies (e.g., Lundholm, 2007) have shown that considerations other than employment are increasingly important for migration, migration decisions are still largely made for labour market reasons. Hence, soon after graduation it can be expected that many student teachers will move from their place of study.

Figure 2 shows the registered place of residence at the end of the year in the 2000-2005 period. It may seem surprising that so many are registered in places outside of the Umeå local labour market region in the year of graduation. On one hand, this shows that many of the students under consideration actually moved during that particular year. On the other hand, in some cases the explanation may involve commuting students or simply the neglect to register at the place of study. Nevertheless, a clear tendency is that, over time, more and more graduate student teachers move away from the Umeå local labour market region to the rest of northern Sweden and other parts of Sweden. The other graduate student teacher cohorts examined in the project (the classes of 1990, 1995 and 2001) exhibit similar migration patterns (Mattsson & Strömgren, 2008). The graduate student teachers' geographical origin plays an important part for their subsequent migration patterns. Of those who graduated in 2000 who were born in northern Sweden, 88% are located there five years after their graduation compared to 25% for those born in other parts of the country.

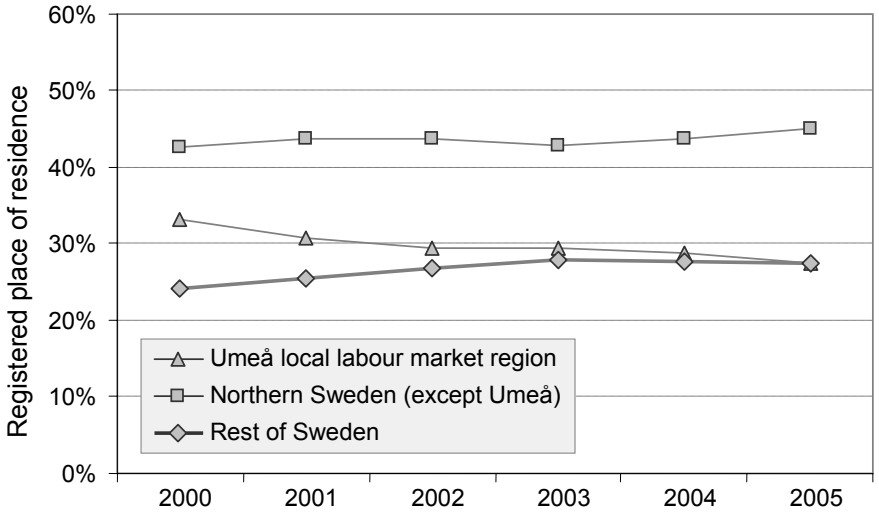

Figure 2. Registered place of residence in the 2000-2005 period

Not surprisingly, the 'employability' of the graduate student teachers depends on how the concept is defined and measured. Utilising the first definition of employability, i.e., a work-based income exceeding non-work-related income, employability is 95% in 2005, five years after graduation. Among those student teacher graduates, 80% were working as teachers of some kind (i.e., employability according to the second definition). In certain parts of Sweden, particularly in the south and among others the counties containing the two largest metropolitan areas of Stockholm and Gothenburg (see Figure 1), a particularly high degree of the alumni are employed in non-teaching-related professions. For those student teacher alumni where the type of education can be determined with a high level of certainty, it is also possible to examine whether they work in the teaching profession they are specifically educated for (i.e., employability according to the third definition). As Table I reveals, graduate pre-school teachers are most likely to work in a teaching profession matching their education. Although pre-school student teachers are thus especially likely to find work within their particular field of study, other teacher education students exhibit a wider range of teaching employment. Graduate gymnasium teachers, who are the least likely to have an occupation matching their education, instead largely work as some other form of teacher, primarily a comprehensive school teacher or a teacher at an institute for higher education (a university college or university). It should be noted that the

category 'other occupation' includes employment in a school, but as school leader rather than a teacher. In 2005, there were eight school leaders (five in a comprehensive school and three in a gymnasium) with varying educational backgrounds, primarily a special education teacher education background.

Table I. Teacher education direction by occupation, 2005

Education	Teaching occupation		Other occupation
	Matches education	*Other teaching*	
Pre-school teacher	85%	0%	15%
Comprehensive school teacher	73%	16%	11%
Gymnasium school teacher	60%	26%	14%
Special education teacher	72%	12%	16%

According to the first definition of employability (i.e., a work-based income greater than non-work related income), up to 87% of the student teachers are already employed in the year of their graduation compared to 36% the year before. The corresponding figure for 2001 is 97%. Although these figures may seem surprisingly high, it should be kept in mind that they only represent a work-based income from any occupation, small or large, exceeding social transfers and other non-work related income. It is no surprise that actual work income also exhibits a substantial increase in the years around the time of graduation: an increase of 113% between 1999 and 2000 and a 45% increase between 2000 and 2001.

There are differences in work-based income depending on gender, line of work and place of residence. In 2003, the average yearly salary was 11% higher for the male student teacher graduates, while in 2005 the wage gap had expanded to 17%. Figure 3, which displays the average yearly salary by workplace type between 2000 and 2005, shows that for all years alumni not working in learning institutions have higher average salaries. There are some notable geographical differences as well. For instance, the county of Västerbotten exhibits lower teacher wages than the rest of northern Sweden. Certain counties in southern Sweden, for instance Stockholm, exhibit particularly high wages in non-teaching professions (cf. Figure 1).

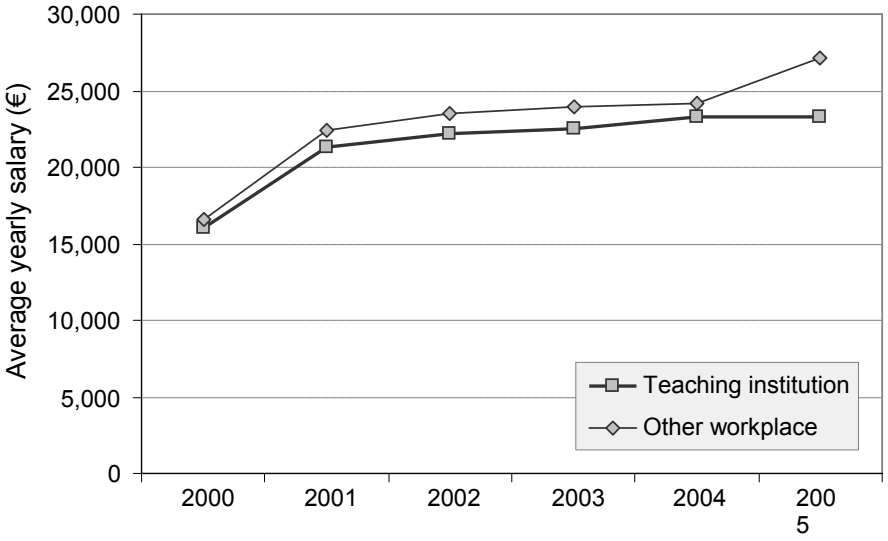

Figure 3. Average yearly salary (€) 2000-2005 by workplace type

The remaining part of this section looks at alumni employment in 2005 in more detail. Using the workplace type and occupational group classifications, alumni statistics for the ten most common workplaces (Table II) and occupations (Table III) are presented. For each workplace/ occupation, the tables show the number of alumni employed, their mean age and the share of women as well as average yearly salary (€) and the corresponding standard deviation. Workplaces and occupations related to teaching are marked in grey.

Among the teaching occupations (Table III), women are especially predominant among pre-school and special education teachers. The highest average wages can be found among special education, higher education and other teaching professionals. In this context, it should be noted that special teacher education is a further higher education programme directed at teachers who have previously graduated. Thus, such graduates tend to be comparatively old and are likely to have previous work experience as teachers.

Table II. Alumni statistics for the ten most common workplace types in 2005 (Workplaces related to teaching are marked in grey)

Workplace type	Number	Mean age	Women	Average yearly salary (€)	Standard deviation
Comprehensive school	282	38	82%	23,336	8,578
Gymnasium	73	36	74%	24,318	8,991
Pre-school	44	32	91%	16,692	8,716
University college or university	23	44	70%	27,706	8,154
Other teaching institution	19	40	74%	28,306	10,403
Administration	16	44	81%	29,160	8,953
Care service	15	36	73%	21,478	9,113
Health care	11	46	100%	28,083	13,638
Interest organisation	5	31	100%	23,644	8,364
Retail	5	30	60%	16,228	6,784

Table III. Alumni statistics for the ten most common occupational groups in 2005 (Occupations related to teaching are marked in grey)

Occupational group	Number	Mean age	Women	Average yearly salary (€)	Standard deviation
Primary education teaching professionals	158	34	75%	22,200	8,533
Secondary education teaching professionals (i.e., gymnasium teachers)	102	36	76%	22,083	8,339
Pre-primary education teaching professionals	79	33	82%	18,771	8,141
Special education teaching professionals	78	49	95%	28,496	6,198
College, university and higher education teaching professionals	23	43	74%	26,602	8,874
Personal care and related workers	10	32	80%	17,133	9,758
Production and operations managers	9	49	89%	42,195	5,894
Other teaching professionals	8	42	63%	27,365	9,665
Public service administrative professionals	8	36	88%	28,078	9,177
Business professionals	6	36	50%	29,760	17,911

Graduate student teachers not working in teaching institutions are most commonly employed in workplaces concerned with administration, care services and health care (Table II). The most common non-teaching occupations (Table III) are personal care and related workers, public service administrative professionals, production and operations managers and business professionals. The occupational group production and operations managers includes the mentioned eight alumni working as school leaders. The wage difference between the non-teaching-related workplace types and occupations is larger than between the teaching-related ones. However, this would not have been the case for occupations had school leader been considered a teaching-related profession. On the other hand, there are some other non-teaching related workplaces and occupations where average salaries are particularly high, such as the occupations of computing professionals and physical and engineering science technicians.

In the following section, the paper reports on the questionnaire and interview study directed at school leaders. For this purpose, the current Swedish teacher education policy, its structures and student recruitment patterns are first clarified.

Perspectives on the effects of the 2001 teacher education reform

Since 2001 'teacher education' is used to refer to all teacher education and pedagogical professional pathways aimed at work in comprehensive school, gymnasium, pre-school, and youth and day-care centres (Governmental bill 1999/2000: 135). A key policy aim of the 2001 teacher education programme is to improve the employability of graduate students on the basis of wider and general competencies for all, in combination with a high degree of individually chosen contents of studies. Based on the national framework, local structures for teacher education are outlined and implemented at 26 universities and university colleges in the country. According to the idea of goal-steering, the curriculum and the contents of courses thus vary between the establishments.

The view on knowledge which underpins the 2001 teacher education reform is clarified in detail in the preceding state report (SOU 1999:63, pp. 57-59). It is, for example, argued that knowledge is created and related to a particular time and place, or culture. Within this socio-cultural perspective, which can further be related to Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978; Kozulin, 1996), the construction of knowledge is seen to be related to individuals' previous experiences, and collectively constructed in meetings between individuals (also see Bourdieu, 1991; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Säljö, 2000).

The 2001 national structures include the creation of a new teacher education programme for undergraduate studies to be closely linked to research and postgraduate studies, and the establishment of a new research area for teacher education. All tracks of teacher education qualify graduate students for entrance to a PhD programme, which prior to the reform was not generally accessible for student teachers directed at teaching in a comprehensive school or pre-school. In order to provide a common knowledge base for future teachers of various school stages, and to bridge traditional gaps between the different teacher groups, a general field of studies (GFS) of 18 months of full-time studies is directed at all students. This professionally-based field covers, for example, curriculum studies, democratic values including gender equity, special needs education, teaching as reflective practice, theories on learning, and child/youth development, perspectives on class, gender, ethnicity and information technology. At the time of collecting the data for this study, the 2001 teacher education programme followed the structures shown in Table IV.

Table IV. National structure of the 2001 teacher education undergraduate programme

Teaching orientation	Time of study
Pre-school (ages 1–5), pre-school class (6 year olds)	210 ECTS (including GFS); 3½ years
Youth leisure centre (ages 7–12)	210 ECTS (including GFS); 3½ years
Early years of comprehensive school (ages approximately 7–12)*	210 ECTS (including GFS); 3½ years
Late years of comprehensive school (ages approximately 13–15)**	270–330 ECTS (including GFS); 4½ years
Gymnasium (ages 16–19)	270–330 ECTS (including GFS); 4½ years
Vocational subjects	180 ECTS (including GFS); 3 years

* Local municipality and/or school leader decision on the age level of teaching for teachers oriented to early years.
** Similarly, local decisions on the age level of teaching for teachers oriented to late years.

Further, and to attract more students, a flexible system of tracks for different teacher orientations is provided, which also differs between the local teacher education providers. Thus, the individual student chooses the contents of studies to a large extent. Moreover, the reform includes the introduction of a one teacher exam, which replaces the previous eight exams for teachers specialising in different school subjects or areas of knowledge. In the exam document locally designed by each university, the teaching orientation in terms of school level and the courses of studies of the individual student should be clarified.

The first students of the 2001 programme graduated in 2005 and 2006 and there were about 8,500 of such students each year (National Agency for Higher Education, 2007). At Umeå University, about 500 student teachers graduated in each of those years. The majority of student teachers are women who nationally make up over 80% of graduate students (National Agency for Higher Education, 2007). This gender division also applies to Umeå University. Large proportions of women opt for teaching directed at the young, but also for older school pupils at the gymnasium level. In 2005 women constituted 96% of graduate students with a pre-school orientation, and 88% with an orientation to

teaching in the early years of comprehensive school. Among teachers of the gymnasium level, women constituted 63% of the graduate students. The highest proportion of men, 37%, graduated with a double exam for teaching in the late years of comprehensive school and the gymnasium.

Evaluations of the 2001 teacher education programme

National evaluations and reports on the 2001 teacher education reform have pointed to various problems connected with the new structures. What is particularly noticed by the Swedish National Agency of Higher Education (2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c) and the two main teacher unions (National Union of Teachers in Sweden & Swedish Teachers' Union, 2006; National Union of Teachers in Sweden, 2004, 2007a, 2007b), as well as by a major student teacher union (the Student Union of the National Union of Swedish Teachers, 2007) is that equal standards of teacher education are not obtained from the different higher education establishments. This is considered to be due to the high degree of decentralisation of teacher education, and the ensuing differences in the interpretations of the national framework by the local institutions. An example of this effect is that the exam diplomas vary a lot between the institutions. The policy of one exam for all teachers proved in fact to be constituted by 379 different types of diplomas for 3,479 graduate students (National Union of Teachers in Sweden, 2007b). Further, different exam diplomas are provided for similar educational tracks for studies carried out at different establishments. What has also been noticed as a weakness, and which applies to graduate teachers directed at teaching the young, is a general lack of substantial knowledge for teaching the basic skills of reading and writing, and Mathematics. Moreover, and contrary to the suggestions of policymakers, the freedom of choice of the students has not led to an increase in qualifications to teach Mathematics and Science, nor foreign languages (French, German and Spanish) for higher school levels. To sum up the critique delivered, it focuses on the apparent lack of national comparability of teacher education which, in turn, is seen to eliminate equal opportunities for the employment of graduate teachers of the 2001 teacher education programme. On the basis of the weak points identified above, a committee set up by the new liberal-conservative government will present national guidelines for new teacher education structures in September 2008.

School leaders' perspectives on employability

As mentioned, primary employers' perspectives on the employability of teachers who graduated from Umeå University within the 2001 teacher education programme, were gained through questionnaires and interviews of school leaders in and around Umeå (also see Figure 2). Questionnaires were used to find school leaders in this geographical area who were likely to have experience in the recruitment of more recently graduated teachers, and to whom interviews could later be directed (Mattsson & Strömgren, 2008). The questionnaires were distributed by e-mail to about 225-250 school leaders in 16 municipalities through a teacher education and school network headed up by Umeå University. Questionnaire answers were received from 55 school leaders, and 26 of these reported the recruitment of one to six 'new' teachers, respectively. In total, the questionnaire answers reported 64 'new' teachers (8 men, 58 women) spread across different school levels, including pre-school, pre-school class, comprehensive school, grades 1–9 and gymnasium. The vast majority, 84% (42 individuals), had a teaching orientation to the early years of comprehensive school. The others were spread across pre-school, gymnasium and the late years of comprehensive school.

Interviews were conducted with 13 school leaders (1 man, 12 women) of 17 individuals (4 men, 13 women) approached by e-mail. Interviewees were chosen on the basis of being heads of different school levels and were thus assumed to have different experiences in the recruitment of specific categories of teachers. The interviewees were geographically distributed over six municipalities. The interviews focussed on the interviewees' experiences of school leadership, perceived qualifications of a 'good' teacher, the importance of graduate teachers, and their views on the 2001 teacher education programme. Interviewees were further invited to reflect on any subject considered to add important information to the study. The professional and educational backgrounds of the interviewees were also covered. An interview guide with open questions was used for the 30-minute-long interviews that were conducted by telephone, recorded on a mini-disc and fully transcribed. The transcripts were sent to the interviewees who were asked to clarify any information found to be missing.

The responsibilities of the interviewed school leaders covered schooling and education from early childhood to the late teen years. Twelve interviewees were graduate teachers oriented to different school levels, including pre-school, early and the late years of the nine-year comprehensive school and gymnasium level. All had longer experience in teaching or care-taking in school, pre-school or day-care centres. One interviewee, who was not a teacher, had a professional background in social work. The average time in a leadership position was nine years.

The interviewed school leaders reported 39 'new' teachers (5 men, 34 women) had been recruited, of whom the majority, 27 individuals (4 men, 23 women), were oriented to teaching in the early years of comprehensive school. Six were oriented to education and teaching in pre-school, and four to teaching at the gymnasium level, all of whom were women. Two individuals, a man and a woman, were oriented to the late years of comprehensive school. The majority of the 'new' teachers reported were employed in an area of teaching which broadly corresponded to the individual's exam orientation. However, nine of those employed taught at other school levels. Among seven who had graduated for teaching in the early years, three were staff in youth leisure centres, two taught in the late years of comprehensive school, one at pre-school and one in a gymnasium. Two individuals with exams for late years in comprehensive school were teaching at the gymnasium level and in grade six, respectively.

The school leaders' views on teacher qualities, including a 'good' teacher, the importance of graduate teachers and their experiences of the 2001 teacher education programme are reported in the following section.

Demand and supply of teacher qualifications

The school leaders' response to what they perceived as essential qualifications for a 'good' teacher varied. Good leadership and theoretical and practical knowledge ('social competence') to handle individuals and groups were generally seen as fundamental knowledge by school leaders of all school stages.

Another general requirement of a 'good' teacher was solid knowledge of the national school policy, including the democratic and fundamental values nationally agreed upon (see National Agency for Education, 2005). Other qualifications particularly demanded by school leaders in

comprehensive schools and gymnasiums included a higher education exam.

> Graduate teachers are required, and I find this very important. […] [As a school leader] you then have the right to demand certain things. (Eva, school leader, early years of comprehensive school)

Good subject knowledge and pedagogical or 'teaching' skills and knowledge were also highly estimated by these school leaders:

> […] in order to raise and 'lift' the pupils […] the starting point is that the teacher has subject knowledge, and also knowledge in methods and pedagogy (Gunnar, school leader, pre-school & early years of comprehensive school).

> […] there will always be individuals who have good knowledge of a subject, and who do not have a pedagogical exam, but who have a natural talent for teaching. But [as a school leader] you can't build the school's educational programme on these individuals (Charlotte, gymnasium school leader).

It was also suggested that a good, qualified teacher would have 'the right' personality, and 'should like to be with children […] and like to be in the classroom' (Åsa, school leader, pre-school class & early years of comprehensive school).

According to the interviewees, the official requirement of an exam diploma meant that teachers who had not graduated could not be hired permanently. However, it was also recognised that the officially demanded qualifications were hard to live up to when certain school subjects are concerned. The lack of qualified teachers in foreign languages, and in Mathematics and science education for older pupils in comprehensive school and in the gymnasium, was thus seen as problematic.

> There's a lack of language teachers in French, German and also in Spanish, which we will now start to give. Though, only one individual has applied for the post as a teacher in Spanish. […] We have a teacher in German [a mother tongue speaker], who

> has no teacher exam, but who has been re-employed for almost 30 years (Åsa, school leader, pre-school class & early years of comprehensive school).
>
> We have very few teachers with qualifications in Mathematics and Science, and that is a real problem (Eva, school leader, early years of comprehensive school).

Although generally positive for individual 'new' teachers who at the time of the interviews were employed, the interviewees pointed out a number of weaknesses or a lack of competencies which the interviewees found were the effects of the 2001 teacher education programme. School leaders for the lower level of comprehensive school found that teachers who recently graduated in this teaching area generally lacked the required qualifications in many subject areas:

> […] the question is whether the teachers oriented to early years should teach in areas in which they lack qualifications (Eva, school leader, early years of comprehensive school).
>
> […] a teacher often teaches subjects that she has not taken in her exam, for example maths, which is still taught (Carina, school leader pre-school & comprehensive school).

A general need concerning teachers at lower levels of comprehensive schools was broader and deeper subject competencies. According to the interviewees, this group of teachers should be prepared to teach a broad variety of subjects within the national curriculum. A wide subject knowledge of the individual teacher was also seen to be particularly important for school areas located in the countryside.

> […] the new teachers in grades 3–5 teach all subjects in class; Maths, Science, Swedish etc, irrespective of their own teaching orientation. They have the responsibility for the whole class in all subjects (Ann-Marie, school leader of youth leisure centre, pre-school class & early years of comprehensive school).

Particular demands of the interviewees included qualifications for teaching basic knowledge of reading, writing, and Mathematics, and

English also came from school leaders responsible for the early years of comprehensive school.

> I find it self-evident that teachers must have basic knowledge in Maths and Swedish. It feels strange to have to ask: 'Do you have knowledge to teach reading?' and to get to know that these qualifications are far from being general knowledge (Britt-Marie, school leader of pre- school class & early years of comprehensive school).

> The lack of knowledge for teaching reading and writing is really a bad effect of the new teacher education programme. I usually tell students who come to this school that they should concentrate on Swedish and their reading and writing skills if they want to be employed (Sofie, school leader of pre-school class & early years of comprehensive school).

> We have had teachers who thought that 'maybe I will manage to teach English in grade six' but who didn't! English has therefore become one of the subjects we have to look at more closely (Berit, school leader of pre-school class & early years of comprehensive school).

However, some school leaders with responsibility for pre-school had other perspectives concerning subject knowledge. It was suggested though that a good teacher should be able to guide the pupil's learning process in any area of knowledge and with no specific knowledge for this.

> Nowadays, subject knowledge has become too emphasised as if the teacher should be an encyclopaedia. […] a teacher should be able to guide children in how to find knowledge (Gun, pre-school & early years of comprehensive school).

> For me subjects are not important as such. I find that subject knowledge is something the teacher can acquire […] The learning aspect is important. Some teachers can make their pupils listen, and others can't (Carina, school leader, pre-school & early years of comprehensive school).

One thing considered as an improvement for those student teachers oriented to pre-school was a stronger focus on writing and the analysis of documents.

> In the pre-school of today we have to write reports which are to be read by others. This new part in teacher education of written analysis – I find it just excellent that students are trained to do this! (Lovisa, school leader, pre-school)

Another important improvement pointed to by the same school leader, Lovisa, was that teachers oriented to pre-school were able to graduate with two exams, which included teaching competencies for pre-school, and/or pre-school class and/or the early years of comprehensive school, and/or youth leisure centres.

> I think it is an advantage that you can have teacher competence for both areas [pre-school and early years of comprehensive school]. I find it possible that teachers graduated for the early years may meet the children at the age of three, to follow them later on (Lovisa, school leader, pre-school).

One interviewed school leader, a former primary teacher who had 14 years experience of school leadership and longer teaching experience from teaching in grades 4-6 thought that the demands of schools rarely corresponded to the supply in terms of the subject orientation of the 'new' teachers. In his view, the policy of a large freedom of choice for the individual has clearly reduced employment opportunities.

> Many students make tricky choices in subjects and teaching orientations. It actually happens that students call me and ask for my advice as a school leader for which [subjects and teaching orientations] I think they should choose. It can be difficult for students to become employed with all this freedom to choose (Gunnar, school leader, early years of comprehensive school).

As a result of the weaknesses, particularly considered to be due to little input in basic knowledge fields for teachers oriented to the early years, a tutorial or 'mentorship' was generally organised in school districts.

> In 2007 we will organise a mentorship programme for teachers who teach reading and writing. Four teachers of the municipality with long and specific experience will be given 20% employment for the in-service training of their colleagues (Ann-Marie, school leader youth leisure centre, pre-school & early years of comprehensive school).

> One of the older, more experienced teachers with a former primary teacher education has extra time to help colleagues [in teaching reading and writing] and also to teach pupils. Another teacher has taught history in the class of a new colleague (Carina, school leader, pre-school, pre-school class & early years of comprehensive school).

Other kinds of support mentioned by the school leaders to improve the teaching knowledge of the new teachers took place in organised 'work teams'.

> We have a sort of mentorship since we have 'work teams'. We always try to integrate new teachers in teams where there are both younger and older staff members (Sofie, school leader, pre-school & early years of comprehensive school).

School leaders of a gymnasium found that the new teachers at this level were insufficiently equipped with knowledge in the special needs field, nor prepared to handle conflicts and other difficult issues. Another weakness, according to one interviewee, was the lack of curriculum knowledge.

> I think they have very thin knowledge! They do not know the teacher contract! How do you read and analyse the school curriculum in teacher education? When I meet new teachers I often find that this [lack of knowledge] is shocking! (Charlotte, gymnasium school leader)

Discussion and concluding remarks

In this study, the employability of student teachers who recently graduated from Umeå University from 2000 onwards is explored from various perspectives. The study of mobility, employability and incomes for the student teacher graduates of 2000 shows that, over time, more and more graduate student teachers are moving away from the Umeå local labour market region. The geographical origin of the alumni plays an important part in their subsequent migration patterns. Almost the entire class of 2000 has some kind of employment five years after graduating; four out of five are working as some kind of teacher. Graduate pre-school teachers are most likely to work in a teaching profession matching their education, while gymnasium teachers are more likely to be involved in other forms of teaching. In certain parts of southern Sweden a particularly high proportion of the alumni are employed in non-teaching related professions. Among those employed as teachers, the highest average wages can be found among special education, higher education and other teaching professionals. In non-teaching professions, there are large wage differences depending on the occupation and workplace type.

Results of the school leader study indicated a number of weaknesses of the 2001 teacher education programme. An apparent lack of teaching skills in the basic knowledge areas of reading, writing and Mathematics for teaching young pupils was noticed. Also, students' individual choices of subject orientation were generally seen to mismatch the needs of the comprehensive school. School leaders for the higher level of a comprehensive school would like to see a more specific knowledge base in foreign languages, including English, and in Mathematics and Science. The gymnasium school leaders, in particular, wanted 'new' teachers to be better prepared for special needs education and for handling conflicts and other difficult issues. Further, it was considered that general knowledge of the school curriculum was too 'thin'.

However, school leaders responsible for pre-school, and those with educational and professional background in the area, were more positive regarding the 2001 programme. It was considered an advantage that pre-school teachers could widen their exam and approach to the school. Further, the broader theoretical approach in teacher education was considered to raise the quality of the graduate pre-school teachers.

Moreover, the views on knowledge differed. School leaders for comprehensive school lacked broader and deeper knowledge for teaching in the compulsory subject areas. In contrast, school leaders with a pre-school background found that the importance of knowledge was over-emphasised and that the role of the teachers was instead to provide support for individual pupils. Finally, the school leader study shows that the employability of the 'new' graduate teachers was in many respects questioned by the comprehensive and gymnasium school leaders.

When measuring employability via the use of register data, an evaluation has to be carried out using the available database variables. Due to a lack of highly detailed descriptions of occupations in the ASTRID database, it is impossible to see whether or not a teacher is teaching the 'wrong' subjects at the 'right' level. In any case, 'employability' is not a straightforward concept. Indeed, the possibility of a graduate student teacher to teach subjects not within the exam, or to have an entirely different occupation, can represent either a strength or a weakness from the individual's point of view. On one hand, it may indicate a lack of labour market demand for the occupation they are educated for and prefer. On the other, it may signify an opportunity and desire of the individual to take on other kinds of work which their education give them access to. From the employer's point of view, it is highly relevant to know whether or not the prospective employed teacher has the qualifications needed. In this context, the construction of teacher education, as well as its contents, is very important for all concerned.

The 2001 teacher education reform aims at decentralisation and deregulation and thereby increased local autonomy (Governmental bill 1999/2000: 135). This is in line with Swedish education policy trends particularly noted since the 1990s (Rönnberg, 2007). Another aim pointed out in this study was to improve the employability of all student teachers by widening the teacher education programme to include a range of general, professionally-based teacher competencies. A flexible study orientation and opportunities for professional development were in this respect considered to enhance the employability of those who have graduated, and to reduce traditional gaps between different teacher categories. The increased recruitment of students for specific

subject areas (particularly Mathematics and Science) was another policy aim.

However, a major conclusion that may be drawn from the school leader study that is also underpinned by a wide range of national reports is that stronger national steering of teacher education is needed. It is obvious that the qualifications of a vast majority of the 'new' teachers, in particular those oriented to the comprehensive school, generally do not satisfy the needs of the primary employers, i.e., school leaders. The lack of the necessary competencies thus may have negative implications for the employability of the graduate teachers in school settings. Another conclusion related to the lack of knowledge for teaching basic skills to the young is that these weaknesses might have undesirable effects for Swedish pupils' learning in the shorter and longer perspectives.

Interestingly, a common misinterpretation of socio-cultural perspectives on knowledge construction, according to Säljö (2000), follows from the disregard of the school as an institutionalised setting where the pupil's construction of knowledge depends on the knowledge and pedagogical skills of a more knowledgeable adult, the teacher. As indicated in this study, school leaders with little experience in the field they manage, in this case individuals with a pre-school teacher background, tended to neglect the need for teaching knowledge at the actual school level and distanced themselves from demands for more 'school subject' related knowledge. However, this view of knowledge is contrary to the key idea of Vygotsky (1978), namely of the close connection between adult reasoning and children's development of logical, more abstract thoughts and problem-solving (Kozulin, 1996). Following this, another conclusion that arises is that school leaders, irrespective of the school level, must understand that the academic qualifications of hired teachers should correspond to the subject area being taught.

Finally, in times of stronger international pressure for professionalism in teaching and teacher education (Council of the European Union, 2001; also see Erixon Arreman & Weiner, 2007), it is difficult to understand why Swedish policymakers of the 2001 teacher education reform seem to have chosen to ignore both practitioners' experience and research, international and Swedish (see Myrberg, 2003), which clearly emphasise the need for professional teaching in the early years. However, the failed policy intentions to attract more students to teaching Mathematics and

Science, and also foreign languages, should probably be related to the larger context of greater employment opportunities for students who choose to opt for the other new directions of study programmes in higher education put in place since the 1990s.

Hopefully, the next teacher education reform in September 2008 will seriously take into account the 2000 Lisbon Declaration on teaching and teacher education, the meaning of which is that the priority of teacher education is to produce 'good' teachers who are able to enhance the lifelong learning of their pupils:

> The most important of these competencies is the ability to learn – maintaining curiosity and interest in new developments and skills – without which lifelong learning cannot exist. For many teachers, however, this ability is difficult to stimulate; and its development should therefore be a focus both of teacher training and of educational research in the coming years (Council of the European Union, 2001, p. 9).

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Advancing Research into and during Teacher Education

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1 Introduction

In knowledge-based societies, policy and practice based on research and evidence have become an urgent requirement. Decisions and developments should be underpinned by the best available knowledge. The OECD and the European Union have promoted this approach in different sectors of society, calling on different disciplines to make their contributions (e.g. Schűller, 2006). Research- and evidence-based practice also concerns schools and teacher education (European Commission, 2007b).

There are many variations in how teacher education has been organised in different countries. There are also many opinions about whether teacher education should be evidence- or research-based and why teachers should have research work experience in their training. Their work in schools is very practical and teachers need many abilities other than research skills. Why should student teachers study scientific research methods if they do not work as researchers in their profession?

The aim of this article is to explore why teachers should work as a researcher in their profession and how a research component can be integrated into pre- and in-service teacher education programmes. The article introduces examples of how we can promote a research-based orientation in primary and secondary teacher education. It also provides ideas on how in-service training could be closely connected with research projects and support teachers' work in local schools.

2 Research- and evidence-based practice in education

The European Union has set up several working groups to promote teaching profession and its attractiveness. Teachers are seen as key agents for European economic, social and cultural purposes. However, the reality is that the teaching profession has a very low status in most countries and teacher education is not a real choice for talented students. Some exceptions exist and on the top of this issue there is Finland where teacher education is one of the most popular programmes in universities (Kansanen, 2003, pp. 86-87). The European Union's teacher education working groups have emphasised that the teaching profession should be seen as a demanding academic career and teachers need the capacity to learn all the time in their work. Teachers are responsible for the European knowledge base and have a big influence on the new generation's capacity to face future challenges.

The teaching profession, as with all high-standard professions, needs the best available academic knowledge in order to fulfil its commitments to society. Teacher education is multidisciplinary and comprises many demanding tasks. Teachers have the important duty of opening pathways for different learners to knowledge and skills. Teachers have to be familiar with the latest knowledge and research about the subject matter. They also have to know how the subject matter can be transformed in relevant ways to benefit different learners and how it can help learners create foundations on which they can build their lifelong learning. They should have a thorough understanding of human growth and development, and they need knowledge of the methods and strategies that can be used to teach various learners. This means that teachers need the latest research results of pedagogical knowledge. In addition, teachers have to be familiar with the curricula and learning environments in education institutions. They also should know about learning in non-formal educational settings, such as in open learning and labour market contexts. Teachers also need up-to-date knowledge of educational technology. Teachers' knowledge base is wide and demanding.

Teachers' work is based on the different types of knowledge. One way to analyse teachers' knowledge base is to divide it into the contents needed in their work and the processes teachers follow in their work. Teachers play an important role in mediating knowledge and skills to different

learners and teachers need a high level of expertise in those areas. This component can be described in a generic sense as the **contents** of mediation, and may be described as the declarative type of knowledge. In addition, teachers need many practical skills as to **how** they as professionals mediate something to individuals or groups and how they construct knowledge jointly. This kind of knowledge can be described as the procedural knowledge of teachers. This division provides some clarification of teachers' work, but it is no longer necessarily wholly relevant even though it helps understand the different sides of professional activities. A major reason we need a new kind of analysis is to transform what the latest research has produced about learning and knowledge creation.

The concept of knowledge has changed from earlier static and transmitted contents to knowledge that is ever renewable and often construed jointly together with other learners. The latest research on learning considers learning as an active individual process in which learners are constructing their own knowledge base. Learning is also increasingly seen as a process based on sharing and participation with different partners in a community (Slavin, 1997; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2003; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Knowledge is socially shared and emerges from participation in socio-cultural activities. The contents and processes are intermediating. The academic contents and teaching processes must not be seen as separate or exclusive. They are complementary in the teaching profession.

In order to understand the creation of knowledge in the teaching profession we have to consider which connections knowledge creation has with 'research-based knowledge' and 'evidence-based knowledge'. Both concepts have created a lot of tension in educational communities. 'Research-based' refers to a systematic investigation through which the scientific community produces new knowledge for education and training. The recent situation is diffuse. Research in education has received a lot of criticism from policy-makers and practitioners. In the educational field, the research-based approach is more unsystematic and scattered than e.g. in health care (especially clinical services), criminal justice, welfare policy (with its focus on social security benefits), housing, transport (with its focus on roads policy) and urban policy. Boaz & Ashby & and Ken Young (2002, p. 7) summarise current deficiencies underpinning why educational research is not serving

policy or practice: much research is considered less than robust, there are paradigm wars, eclectic methods that are competing rather than complementing, large datasets are analysed but there is relatively little true experimentation, the research community is fragmented, there is no accessible database of research-based evidence (albeit fresh initiatives are underway), and there are few systematic reviews. Some educational researchers have proposed very experimental and controlled models for educational research to allow more cumulative knowledge (e.g. Slavin, 2002). These suggestions have attracted some very controversial opinions among education researchers.

The need for research is obvious but policy-makers and practitioners question its value for providing real help regarding problems in practice (e.g. Hemsley & Brown, 2003; Department of Education, 2000). Educational phenomena are multilayered and multidisciplinary. Most studies only inform from a very narrow perspective. The knowledge coming from research is often incoherent and scattered, particularly if they involve single studies without a connection to a larger research project design or research programme. There is a need for research on education but the access to and practical application of it face many barriers.

Berliner (2002) and McCormick (2003) note that educational research is the hardest science of all when striving for research- and evidence-based policy and practice due to the enormous complexity of educational phenomena. Berliner writes:

> *'Our science forces us to deal with particular problems, where local knowledge is needed. Therefore, ethnographic research is crucial, as are case studies, survey research, time series, doing experiments, action research, and other means to collect reliable evidence for engaging in unfettered argument about educational issues. A single method is not what the government should be promoting for educational researchers. It would do better by promoting argument, discourse and discussion'* (Berliner, 2002, p. 20).

Even though educational research cannot provide direct applications to teachers there are many ways that it can inform or lead teachers' work. It provides the profession with the necessary foundational knowledge about teaching and learning. Teachers need knowledge of students'

development, recent scientific results in subject matters and information on how different students learn and why they do not learn. There is a clear need to improve educational research but it is inefficient if teachers do not have the capacity to understand how knowledge is created through research. They must have basic knowledge of research methods and some competence to evaluate the relevance and quality of research results. They need scientific literacy. Without this skill they are merely actors who are applying orders coming from outside their practice. They need scientific literacy in order to understand on which grounds they can build their work. Without this understanding they have very few opportunities to learn new and question earlier knowledge and practices.

Gibbons et al. (1994) opened an important scenario regarding the creation of scientific knowledge when they proposed that scientific knowledge is created through different modes. Gibbons introduced Mode 1 and Mode 2. In Mode 1 problems are set and solved in a context governed by the, largely academic, interests of a specific community. By contrast, Mode 2 knowledge is carried out in the context of application. Mode 1 is often disciplinary while Mode 2 is chiefly transdisciplinary. This division also helps us to understand how teachers can be partners in the creation of academic knowledge.

Since then the new 'Triple Helix' concept has also entered the discussion. It goes even further and seeks to bring universities, industry and governments to work together in interdisciplinary networks and flexible structures in order to answer social needs in society (Greco et al. 2005; Kazakova 2001). It means an interactive partnership with different stakeholders. In teacher education it may involve be joint research projects with higher education institutions, schools, enterprises or cultural institutions. Etzkowitz (2003) argues that we have a shift in both society and universities. It arises from the internal development of the university and external influences on academic structures associated with the emergence of 'knowledge-based' innovation. At the same time, there are also many critical voices warning that this entrepreneurial paradigm is a threat to the traditional integrity of the university and that there is a danger it will lose its role as an independent critic of society.

Teachers as representatives of the knowledge profession should be aware of the different modes of knowledge, including both the

advantages and threats brought by these different approaches. Teachers need research-based knowledge but they also have a right and obligation to assess and reflect on what works. They need evidence. This means assessing why it is worthwhile to apply something in their work. Evidence here comes from different sources. Evidence can be based on research reports and studies or thematic reviews of research. An urgent issue concerns the quality of the evidence and which kinds of evidence we can trust (e.g. Marston & Watts, 2003; Thomas, 2004; Agalianos, 2006). We can acquire evidence through national and local evaluations and other systematic data gathering. Sebba (2004) introduces three types of evidence in current policy-making: national surveys conducted by government departments, inspection data, and research-based evidence from externally commissioned projects or programmes.

Evidence can also stem from the observations and experiences of experts, policy-makers and practitioners in their own fields (e.g. Issitt & Spence, 2005). Hammersley (2004) argues that this evidence does not necessarily emerge from systematic investigation but it still can be important. There are also many voices that stress the role of practitioners in assessing the relevance of evidence. Regardless of its origin (research or e.g. observations), when practitioners are informed through evidence they have the right and obligation to assess its relevance. Robertson and Dale (2007) remark that users must judge what works when applying evidence in practice. There is always a specific context and they have to ask not only what works, but for whom, in which circumstances and so on. Application, thus, depends on a mix of evidence and judgement, namely it is a dynamic process in which the teacher or policy-maker is also attuned to the effects and consequences and uses this knowledge to loop it back into the process.

3 Knowledge creation is not a linear process

The recent understanding of knowledge production has revealed that knowledge is a more comprehensive concept than research or evidence. Knowledge is constructed through research (with its different modes), evidence, literature and learning experiences. Knowledge creation needs different information sources and social interaction. When promoting research- and evidence-based policy and practice it is necessary to understand that policy-makers and practitioners are learners in their

own work and create knowledge in their practice. New competencies arise from social interaction, knowledge sharing, and collective problem-solving and are embedded in the shared competence of communities and organised groups of experts and professionals.

If we see knowledge creation as an interactive process, then the application of knowledge is no longer a one-direction process. It is a joint process where researchers, policy-makers and practitioners work together in a complementary way seeking evidence for better policy and practice.

As a conclusion, the following figure of knowledge creation as an interactive process is presented.

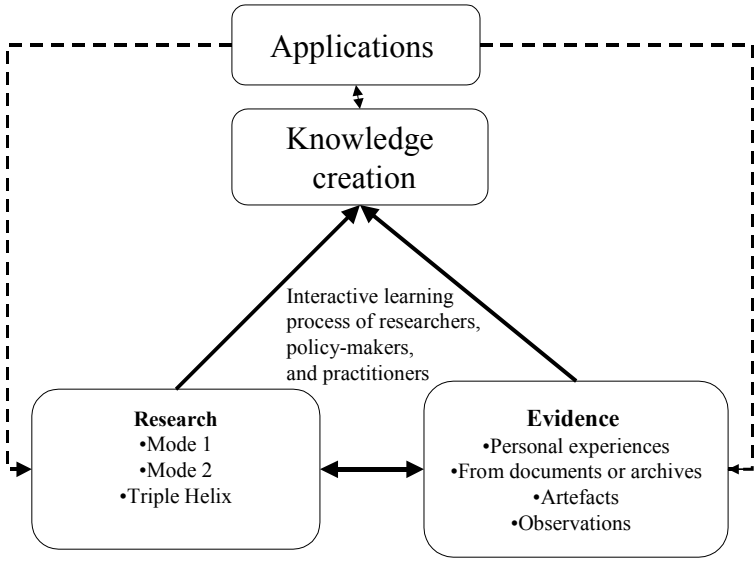

Figure 1. Knowledge creation as an interactive process

When seeking new ways to create knowledge as an interactive process we see that schools and teacher education could be partners in 'virtuous knowledge sharing' (European University Association, 2007, p. 21). This notion is built on the conviction that creative knowledge production is a sharing process. Virtuous knowledge sharing proposes that two very different sectors – academia and society at large – join forces in the quest for knowledge and problem-solving. It suggests creating a pool of very

diverse talent, expertise and experience which would be well equipped to tackle a wide range of questions and problems. Virtuous knowledge sharing is closely connected with the idea of 'engagement' (Gibbons, 2005; Bjarnason & Coldstream, 2003). This paradigm refers to a genuine interchange and a two-way communication process in which higher education institutions, academic research, practitioners along with local or regional stakeholders work in joint projects of knowledge creation.

4 Teachers as problem-solvers

Teachers work in conditions where they must find, observe and understand the complexity of educational processes and deal with evidence coming from different sources. They also need to be open to acquire and assess local evidence. Scardamalia and Bereiter (e.g. 2002; 2003) examined the behaviour of experts. The feature that truly distinguishes experts from others is their approach to new problems. The pattern-recognition and learned procedures that lead to intuitive problem-solving are only the beginning. The expert invests it in what Bereiter and Scardamalia call progressive problem-solving, that is, the tackling of problems. This increases expertise rather than reducing problems to previously learned routines.

Many researchers have stressed that expertise is the integration of different kinds of knowledge. Davenport and Prusak (1998) found that an expert needs codified knowledge and organised official and literally transferable knowledge. In addition, the development of expertise needs role models, observing experts, tacit knowledge, a social network and even good stories of successful practice. Davenport and Prusak (1998) point out that experts' knowledge is deep personal knowledge which has been tested in practical situations

According to Schön (1991), experts always face problems in situations that are unique and involve uncertainties, value conflicts and other tensions due to their complexity. They work in complex situations and therefore need various kinds of evidence. This poses special requirements on their knowledge base. Experts' knowledge is rational knowledge, but this is not sufficient. They also need principles, rules and models, as well as to know how to apply scientific theories and techniques to complex problems. Teachers' work comprises so many

uncertainties and changing elements that they cannot be provided with directly applicable knowledge or practice for their work. They need independent thinking skills and reflection in their work. Teachers' competence must include a readiness to analyse a situation like a researcher, draw conclusions and take action. This means that teachers need a critical mind and the ability to reflect. Reflection can be in action or on action. Because many decisions have to be made rapidly – in action – teachers must have deeply internalised the knowledge and the moral code which will guide them as they adapt to changing situations.

5 Action research as part of the teaching profession

Teachers as researchers and practitioners who are seeking evidence from their schools and students' learning is a movement that has implementers all over the world. Bob Dick reviews action research cases in several countries (Dick, 2006). The article shows there are many activities under the action research title. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between action research and other research methods. He summarises that

> *' good research is designed to fit the situation and the purpose. In a fast changing world, that philosophy suits action research well'*

There are many good examples of how teachers develop their practice through action research (e.g. Visser, 2004; Vanderweghe et al., 2006) or working in joint projects in which their combine their professional wisdom and research in local contexts (e.g. Frankham & Howes, 2006; Ragland, 2006; Issitt, & Spence, 2005; Jackson, 2006).

School-based networks can also have a close relationship with research. One example is the Teacher Researcher Net (TRN) which consists of teachers working in different schools around Finland and partly abroad. It was founded at the beginning of 1994 at the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland. This Net works as a resource for developing teacher education, and a forum of collegial learning and empowerment. The range of the network's research activities cover science teaching, village schools, pre-primary education, narrative research, assessment developing, mathematics teaching – especially 'mathematics with a Hungarian approach' and inclusive teaching. The Teacher Research Net has arranged Teacher Researcher

Days (1994-1998), Teacher Researcher Summer Schools (since 1999) for postgraduates and in-service education for teachers in Finland and Estonia. Student teachers have also been able to include Teacher Researcher Courses in their advanced studies since1995. Publishing is the key part of the Net. The Journal of the Teacher Researcher, a discussion forum for student, school and university teachers was founded in 1995 (e.g. Husso, M.-L. & Vallandingham, T. 2004)

John Elliott (2001) has developed the theory and practice of action research in the contexts of curriculum and teacher development and directed a number of collaborative classroom research projects with teachers and schools. He has been a promoter of teachers as researchers and the action research paradigm He has also raised the question about the need of a theory for evidence-based practice. He has analysed David Hargreaves' and Lawrence Stenhouse's concepts of teachers as researchers. He concludes that the main difference between them is their perspective. 'Whereas Hargreaves is primarily concerned with defining research as a 'basis' for practice, Stenhouse is primarily concerned with defining practice as a basis for research' (Elliott, 2001, p. 572). He hopes that his article draws attention to work that has shaped the 'new direction' for both teaching and learning *and* educational research in the recent past. He sees that its potential as a resource to draw on in conceptualising links for the future has not yet been exhausted.

6 Research into recent teacher education programmes

It is not easy to create a common picture of how teacher education programmes coach prospective teachers to use the research- and evidence-based approach in their practice. EURYDICE gives information about TE lengths in different countries and the proportion of professional training. It does not inform to what extent programmes consist of research-oriented studies or supervision of teachers to become reflective practitioners.

However, Eurydice recently undertook a survey (2007) which gave more information about 20 national units that have provided information (CZ, DK, DE, ES, FR, IT, CY, LV, LT, HU, MT, AT, PL, RO, SK, FI, SE, UK-ENG/NIR/WLS and UK-SCT and LI). In several countries, the research component is established centrally as part of initial teacher education.

This is the case in Denmark (in all professional teacher education programmes); in Cyprus (at the undergraduate level, a 42-hour compulsory course concerning qualitative and quantitative research methods, the critical reading of research papers and use of databases for policy-making recommendation; SPSS training is optional; in addition, a 30-hour course on research methods is required for a permanent position as a secondary school teacher); in Latvia (all study courses include research aspects and skills); in Malta (where 4 ECTS credits at undergraduate level and 10 ECTS credits at postgraduate level cover both qualitative and quantitative research); in Romania and in Slovakia (in the context of the diversification of topics addressed by research and development in various regions at methodical centres outside of universities); and in Finland.

In Finnish teacher education all teachers from elementary to secondary school have research training in their five-year TE programmes. TE has been very research-oriented since the late 1970s and all teachers must have achieved the MA level (2nd cycle degree of the Bologna process). These programmes consist of about 20% of research studies (approximately 60 ECTS) with research methodology and a master's Thesis. The basic qualification to serve as a TE lecturer in universities is a doctoral degree (Niemi & Jakku-Sihvonen. 2006).

There have also been recent reforms in Austria, the 'upgrading' of previous teacher training centres in teacher training universities is considered a first step towards the objective of familiarising teachers with research, whose development is considered a very important challenge in the coming years. In some countries (e.g. Germany and Spain) research training is only linked with subject training and not professional training, i.e. not in relation to education matters except for those who choose this subject as a field of study as such.

In almost all countries, for teacher training at both primary and secondary levels teacher trainers benefit from research training (a PhD is often the prerequisite), and in some cases a certain number of years of experience in research is also required.
However, we must stress that the picture of practitioners is not homogenous. Even among professionals of the same professional group there are several different age cohorts who have different training and

skills. In the same school, teachers may have very different capacities as well as attitudes to see research-based practice as a resource.

7 Research and practice in the teacher education curriculum – The Finnish case

Finland is an example of research-based teacher education. The responsibility for providing education for prospective teachers at primary and secondary schools rests on the universities. In 1979, the basic qualification for secondary and elementary school teachers was defined as a master's degree in the form of programmes requiring five years to complete. The purpose of this modification was to unify the core aspects of elementary and secondary school education and to develop an academically high standard of education for prospective teachers. Teacher education for the secondary school level was also reformed by expanding the scope of pedagogical studies. Finnish higher education has moved to Bologna-process degrees since 2005. A teacher's qualification still requires MA degrees and TE education degrees are 5-year programmes consisting of 3-year BA (180 ECTS) + 2-year MA (120 ECTS) degrees (Niemi & Jakku-Sihvonen, 2006.)

Professors and supervisors of Finnish teacher education are responsible for guiding students in the research-oriented aspects of their education. BA and MA degrees consist of research methodological studies and theses which are scientific studies. Students learn to read educational research reports, to inquire into data, to analyse it and make conclusions. Research methods may vary from historical analysis to surveys and experiments. The main object of these studies is not the completion of the master's thesis itself, but actually to further the process by which students come to see themselves as actively studying and working subjects. In this aspect of the degree programme, the processes of active working and thinking are integrated in various complex and sometimes unexpected ways. The aim of the guiding process is to help students discover and tap their own intellectual resources and to make them better able to utilise the resources of the study group with which the student works (Niemi and Jakku-Sihvonen 2006, p. 37).

Another important aim of research-oriented studies is to educate teachers who are able to study and develop their own research-based practices. For this reason, the modules on behavioural research methods are also obligatory for subject teachers. The critical scientific literacy of teachers and their ability to use research methods are considered to be crucial. Accordingly, Finland's teacher education programmes require studies of both qualitative and quantitative research traditions. The aim of these studies is to train students to find and analyse problems they may expect to face in their future work. Research studies provide students with an opportunity to complete an authentic project in which students must formulate a problem in an educational field, be able to search independently for information and data related to the problem, elaborate on this in the context of recent research in the area and synthesise the results in the form of a written thesis. They learn to study actively and to internalise the attitude of researchers as they do their work.

Teachers' pedagogical studies also include guided teaching practice (approximately 20 ECTS). The aim of guided practical studies is to support students in their efforts to acquire professional skills in researching, developing and evaluating teaching and learning processes. In addition, students should be able to reflect critically on their own practices and social skills in teaching and learning situations. During guided practical studies, students should meet pupils and students from various social backgrounds and psychological orientations and have opportunities to teach them according to the curriculum.

Teaching practice is integrated into all levels of teacher education. It is supervised by university teachers, university training school teachers or local school teachers depending on the phase of practice (Jyrhämä, 2006) (Figure 2). In most cases research studies are integrated with teaching practice. Students have small assignments to follow up and analyse pupils' behaviour and the school community. They must reflect on their observations and make conclusions on how to develop their own teaching and improve practices in schools.

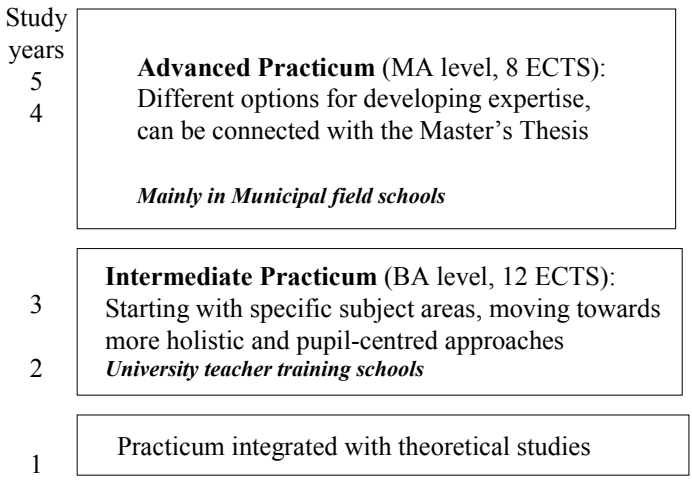

Figure 2. Teaching practice in Finnish teacher education curricula

The main principle is that practice should start as early as possible and support student teachers' growth towards expertise. At the beginning it guides student teachers to observe school life and pupils from an educational perspective, then it focuses on specific subject areas and pupils' learning processes. Finally, it supports student teachers as they take holistic responsibility in their teaching and schools. This period may be closely connected with their research studies and master's thesis.

8 Research into in-service teacher education

Teachers' work is demanding and requires career-long learning. Unfortunately, we have much evidence that

> *'In many Member States there is little systematic coordination between different elements of teacher education, leading to a lack of coherence and continuity, especially between teacher's initial professional education and subsequent induction, in-service training and professional development; nor are these processes often linked to school development and improvement, or to educational research. Incentives for teachers to carry on updating their skills throughout their professional lives are weak.'* (Commission of The European Communities, 2007a, p. 5).

Hilda Borko has sought ways to promote teachers' professional development and how to improve schools and learning outcomes

though teachers' development. She has drafted a model in which a situative perspective is an essential element. The term *situative* refers to a set of theoretical perspectives and lines of research with roots in various disciplines including anthropology, sociology and psychology. Situative theorists conceptualise learning as changes in participation in socially organised activities, and individuals' use of knowledge as an aspect of their participation in social practice.

From the situative perspective, teacher learning is understood as a process of increasing participation, a process of becoming knowledgeable in and about teaching. Teacher learning may occur in many forums of practice, including their classrooms, their school communities, and professional development courses in workshops. Borko (2004) drafted a schema in which teachers and researchers work together in various professional programmes, some on focusing on an improvement in teachers' subject knowledge, some on development of the curriculum. The key issue is that the educational research community is involved in providing the high quality professional development to teachers. Researchers play the role of a facilitator in situative learning. The figure below illustrates these relationships.

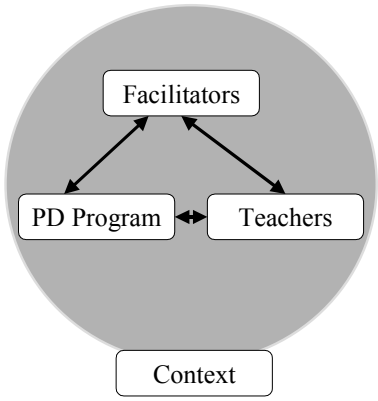

Figure 3. Elements of a professional development system (Borko, 2004, p. 4)

The LUMA Centre (http://www.helsinki.fi/luma/) is another example of cross-boundary activities connecting research and teachers' work in schools. It serves science teachers, students and researchers. The centre is co-ordinated by the Faculty of Science at the University of Helsinki promoting the teaching of biology, chemistry, geography, mathematics,

physics and technology and enhancing interactions between schools, universities and business and industry. The aim is cross-disciplinary co-operation. The LUMA Centre also seeks to encourage children and young people to become involved in scientific activities. The name LUMA comes from the words referring to science and mathematics (LU= *Luonnontieteet* in Finnish, science in English, MA= *Matematiikka* in Finnish, mathematics in English).

Research has been integrated into the activities of the LUMA Centre. Disseminating new research findings is the key to supporting teachers' lifelong learning. This is achieved with the help of LUMA Science Fairs and summer courses, and by offering the opportunity to take part in research and to follow new developments through the newsletter, the webzine *Luova* and the master's theses published by the resource centres.

The LUMA Centre encourages teachers to play an active role in developing their own teaching using the latest research and by also being an action researcher in their own schools. Teachers are provided with news of the latest new research knowledge, they become familiar with 'this month's researcher', they have information of science and education conferences and events. The Centre also organises annual conferences, workshops and summer courses for teachers. The main principle is that researchers and teachers work together.

LUMA websites provide support (in Finnish, partly also in Swedish and English) to teachers of mathematics and science. It includes information on experimental work and modelling, a questions section, the latest research news and information on educational opportunities. The website also illustrates materials and tools for science teaching. The sites and support cover activities from early education to higher education. The purpose is to provide teachers with new knowledge in sciences and pedagogy.

The LUMA Centre also invites pupils to work with researchers. They can join virtual clubs on the web or participate in science days or camps. Young pupils may also work with club assignments with their parents. In addition, pupils have access to video master classes of physics prepared by the best researchers from the League of European Research Intensive Universities (LERU) through the so-called LERU-Kids project.

LUMA-newsletters are delivered to 70,000 teachers, student teachers and those interested in developing science teaching. Every year 2,000-3,000 teachers and 1,200-1,500 pupils participate in conferences or other events. The activities connect pre- and in-service teacher education. Student teachers are integrated in all activities.
(http://www.helsinki.fi/luma/)

The European Commission 'published the document 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education' (Commission of the European Communities, 2007a, p. 14) emphasising the importance of reflective practice and research in teachers' work: '…as with members of any other profession, teachers have a responsibility to develop new knowledge about education and training. In a context of autonomous lifelong learning, their professional development implies that teachers:

- continue to reflect on their practice in a systematic way;
- undertake classroom-based research;
- incorporate into their teaching the results of classroom and academic research;
- evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and amend them accordingly; and
- assess their own training needs.'

Teachers are in varying phases of their careers and need different support in their professional development. The requirement for a continuum of career-long education for teachers is becoming ever more important. On this continuum research-based activities can play an important role.

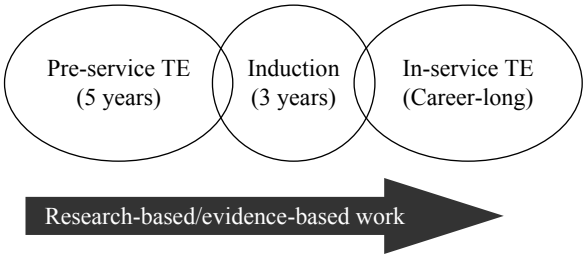

Figure 4. Integration research with the teacher education continuum for the whole teaching career

To develop their professional capacity practitioners need a community in which the learning of new ideas and practices is promoted. This also concerns teachers as researchers and when they are creating knowledge within their own arenas.

9 How to promote research-based orientation in teachers' work – Influential factors

Teacher education must provide teachers with solid scientifically-based knowledge and help teachers achieve the capacity to expand and deepen their professional wisdom through their own inquiring into professional practice and through critical reflection. The integration of scientific knowledge and professional practice is necessary for teachers' capacity to act and achieve confidence in their profession.

Niemi (2007; Commission of the European Communities, 2007b, 42) analyses the conditions for promoting evidence-based practice in education and training. No information source or action in itself can promote evidence-based action. The main factors can be summarised by the following components: (1) research competence and research capacity-building starting at the pre-service level of teacher education; (2) working conditions which promote evidence-based practice; (3) the quality of evidence and research; (4) the effective delivery of and easy access to evidence; (5) an evaluation culture which gives space to contextual factors and practitioners' knowledge; and (6) collaborative professional networking.

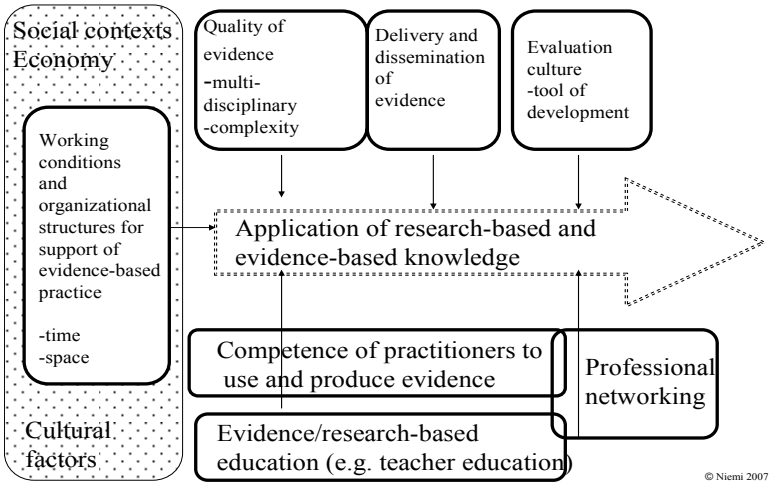

Figure 5. An evidence-based orientation in practitioners' work needs many actors

The application of evidence- and research-based knowledge depends on many factors which mutually interact. The conditions in which schools and teachers and other practitioners work can be very different. European countries different in how much they allocate to education and training. They also differ in how much they invest in research and development, and particularly in education research.

The figure reveals that no information source by itself can promote research- and evidence-based action. Policy-makers and practitioners need the capacity to understand how evidence is built. The more their decisions have effects and power the more they need critical scientific literacy to help them understand the validity and relevance of information from research and other evidence sources. Evidence is also created by practitioners through reflection and the sharing of experience. They need open and analytical minds to achieve truthful evidence and communities which support practitioners' creation of knowledge. Educational situations and decisions are always very complex phenomena and evidence-based action must also approach situations from multidisciplinary and multi-professional perspectives.

Teachers must have opportunities to link teaching and learning together with the latest research dealing with the contents and methods of

teaching. However, this requires a new kind of co-operation with the academic community and the representatives of practitioners. It also requires the organisational support of higher education institutions to arrange platforms and models to join knowledge creation in pre- and in-service teacher education.

When promoting research and evidence-based practice, it is not enough that teachers are provided with information about research, offering it as a top-down process. They need the competence to acquire different kinds of evidence to inform their practice and decisions. It seems that, without research, methodological studies and experiences of research processes, it is very difficult to internalise an evidence-based orientation.

Working conditions at schools must allow teachers to grow as professionals. The teaching profession should offer an intellectually and morally challenging career with a real status in society. A precondition is that representatives of the teaching profession have the capacity to work as professionals and also have the time, space and resources to act like professionals. In many cases, this calls for better salaries and/or new salary systems and administrative structures which encourage and support teachers to develop their own professional practice.

Advancing co-operation and continuous learning among practitioners requires a high quality research community that contributes with internationally recognised research as well as communication and collaboration with practitioners and decision-makers. Co-operation must not lower ambitious scientific aims but should enrich research designs and methodologies. We need a new generation of researchers who understand knowledge creation in co-operative projects. However, this requires new kinds of research projects where time and other resources are reserved for collaboration. Researchers need funding in which new methods and time allocations are recognised, while practitioners need resources in their local contexts to become partners. The latest EURYDICE survey (2007) revealed that no country has any research component in their teachers' work load. In some countries teachers are allowed to be partners in research projects. We have to ensure that evidence- and research-based practice do not occur without funding, infrastructure and human resources.

Networking and co-operation are important components of the teaching profession and should be integrated with teachers' pre- and in-service education and implemented in teachers' daily work. Working with other teachers and professionals provides synergy when applying evidence-based approaches. Networking processes also need supportive infrastructure and moderators. The co-operation of practitioners and researchers promotes action research and other long-term developmental processes.

Principals and local school leaders are key persons when it comes to promoting research- and evidence-based practice in schools. The crucial question is how school leaders can organise school-based development, mediate relevant evidence to teachers, promote quality assurance and encourage teachers to create evidence for school improvement.

10 European scenarios

If the teaching profession aims to achieve a high professional status, teacher education must prepare teachers to work using research- and evidence-based approaches in their work. This is only possible if they have the competence to use different kinds of evidence, including the evidence that research provides. They must also have the capacity to carry out action research in their classrooms and schools. The pre-service teacher education curriculum provides a foundation but without research-oriented in-service training teachers' potential to renew and develop their own profession will stagnate. There are good examples of how in-service training has supported teachers' work in local schools and these activities are closely connected with research projects.

In Europe there are increasing efforts to raise teachers' competence and status. Since the Lisbon Strategy, education and training has been the focus of the European Commission and several documents have been published to improve the quality of teacher education (e.g. European Commission , 2004; Commission of the European Communities, 2007). The clear message is that teacher education should be based on research and teachers' work requires abilities to reflect the evidence on which they base their practice.

Teacher education must be included as part of the European Higher Education Area and its status should be equivalent to that of other higher education studies. The prerequisite is that teacher education rests on a research-based foundation with three basic conditions:

- Teachers need profound knowledge of the latest advances of research in the subjects they teach. In addition, they need to be familiar with the latest research on how something can be taught and learnt. Interdisciplinary research on subject content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge provides the foundation for developing teaching methods that can be adapted to suit different learners.

- Teacher education in itself should also be an object of study and research. This research should provide knowledge about the effectiveness and quality of teacher education implemented by various means and in different cultural contexts.

- The aim is that teachers internalise a research-orientated attitude to their work. This means that teachers learn to take an analytical and open-minded approach to their work, they draw conclusions based on their observations and experiences, and they develop their teaching and learning environments in a systematic way.

To achieve all these aims we need European research programmes in which research- and evidence-based teaching and teacher education are in the focus. These programmes could open new scenarios for how to promote knowledge creation in education. Teachers and teacher educators also need European doctoral programmes in which they can learn new scientific approaches along with multidisciplinarity. At the national level, action research programmes or correspondence situational models could provide platforms for teachers' and teacher educators' continuous education. Local or regional action research projects should be brought together within larger programmes in which researchers serve as facilitators and teachers are actively involved. If teacher education is a real part of the European Higher education area then the teaching profession should be a graduate profession and all three cycles of the Bologna process should be implemented in teacher education. This means we also need doctoral programmes (3rd cycle of the Bologna

process) for teachers, principals and teacher educators, while at the same time research into and during teacher education is actively promoted.

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Action Theory in Habermas and Educational Practices

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In his postscript essay 'Knowledge and Human Interests: a General Perspective' Habermas refers to the ancient view that ''The only knowledge that can truly orient action is knowledge that frees itself from mere human interests and is based on Ideas – in other words, knowledge that has taken a theoretical attitude'(Habermas 1987: 301). Pursuing this notion of theorising as rising above the everyday preoccupations that characterise the 'performative attitude' of actors, he incorporates into his schema of the 'theoretical attitude' a conceptual element that represents the stance ''that frees those who take it from dogmatic association with the natural interests of life and their irritating influence' (1987: 303). At the same time, however, he cautions against the mistake of thinking that theory can be freed from human interests, presenting the well-known three-part construct, derived from Apel, of knowledge-constitutive interests through which actors can theorise about and understand their world:

'There are three categories of processes of enquiry for which a specific connection between logical-methodological rules and knowledge-constitutive interests can be demonstrated. This demonstration is the task of a critical philosophy of science that escapes the snares of positivism. The approach of the empirical-analytical sciences incorporates a *technical* cognitive interest; that of the historical-hermeneutic sciences incorporates a *practical* one; and the approach of critically oriented sciences incorporates the *emancipatory* cognitive interest that, as we saw, was at the root of traditional theories' (1987: 308).

Leaving aside for the moment the difficulties of making broad categorisations of this kind, Habermas uses the core concept of knowledge-constitutive interests to support a philosophical argument that allows for different epistemologies to match the different ontologies that follow from the perspective of action based on different interests.

The philosophical model he develops is an inclusive or pluralistic one, based on a view of human actors with different interests and intentions whose actions generally can be explained as fundamentally driven by different forms of rationality. The eclecticism of Habermas in constructing this framework is another facet of his pluralism: he borrows from phenomenological sociology, symbolic interactionism, philosophy of language, critical theory, Parsonian functionalism, Kantian and Hegelian thinking and many other sources. This eclecticism is partly due to his view that the development of rationalisation is a cumulative process in which old paradigms remain as residual intuitions (1996b) but it is also a function of the core tenets of his theory of communicative action: that the basic mechanism of human rationality is the capacity of human actors to reach agreement through no force but the force of the better argument. As a guiding construct and core ethical principle for educators, this belief in the rational capacity of all human actors to reach agreement through rational discourse on matters of fact and value seems a fitting starting point for thinking about the intentions and actions of educators. It is fitting because it is inclusive in relation to ways of working aimed at establishing truth and rightness; it avoids the entrenched position-taking of confrontational approaches (without losing the criticality inherited from the critical theory tradition); and it takes an idealistic view of human actors as capable of learning and reaching agreement. None of these points, however, is made without recognition of the difficulties involved in pursuing a course based on faith in human rationality and capacity to do what is 'good' (by common agreement).

The optimism referred to above does not inhibit criticality. In *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (1987b), for example, the technical-cognitive human interest is related to instrumental reason and the formation of expert cultures in the modern, capitalistic state: ''As instrumental, reason assimilated itself to power and thereby relinquished its critical force …' (1987b: 119). Here, he acknowledges Foucault's critique of reason as a form of knowledge-power: 'A *gaze* that objectifies and examines, that takes things apart analytically, that monitors and penetrates everything, gains a power that is structurally formative for these institutions. It is a gaze of the rational subject who has lost all merely intuitive bonds with his environment and torn down all the bridges built up of intersubjective agreement, and for whom, in his monological isolation, other subjects are only accessible as the objects

of non-participant observation' (1987b: 245). Even here, however, in his summing up of Foucault's analysis we can detect the grounds of his objection to the postmodern critique of reason and that is in his depiction of the rationality of actors in the lifeworld as holding both a potentiality for self-entrapment (especially through the distorted ideologies of the system world) and a potential for emancipation (through exercising their rationality potential in critical discourse). In the Foucauldian critique of reason, the sciences of psychology, pedagogy, sociology, political science, cultural anthropology are all seen as 'intermeshing' in institutions to form a technology of power. The critique of reason as power-knowledge is acknowledged by Habermas as a great challenge to the notion of a universal rationality rooted in the three categories of knowledge constitution, but one that must be countered if the descent into relativism is to be avoided. Foucauldian analysis provides a powerful means of analysis of the way that rationalised systems in education, such as outcomes-based curricula, quality assurance systems, assessment regimes can discipline both educators and learners, forming new subjectivities through the exercise of 'humble modalities' of power and disciplinary procedures (Dwyer 1995, Edwards and Usher 1994). Such a critique has been applied to educational settings, especially to examine the effects of bureaucratic procedure, hierarchical surveillance and examination practices such as self-monitoring and self-assessment against 'objective' criteria (Ball 1994, Edwards and Usher 1994, Hall and Millard 1994).

The examination of micro-practices of disciplinary power in Foucault is replaced in Habermas by the more general concept of 'steering systems' of money and power, for example in the second volume of the 'Theory of Communicative Action (Habermas: 1987c). Here, he proposes that we think of societies as both lifeworlds and systems simultaneously and of lifeworlds as being increasingly subjected to the logic of systems thinking. We can think of the lifeworld, as '… represented by a culturally transmitted and linguistically organised stock of interpretive patterns' (1987c: 124) relevant segments of which come into focus and are opened up for problematisation in a particular action situation. Through communicative action, social actors draw on the relevant background assumptions of the lifeworld, yet there is also the possibility of drawing away from what is taken for granted. The action situation thus holds the potential for both social reproduction and change. This potential for new understandings is immanent in communicative action

in that cultural givens can be problematised: 'Every step we take beyond the horizon of a given situation opens up access to a further complex of meaning, which, while it calls for explication, is already intuitively familiar. What was then "taken for granted", is transformed in the process into cultural knowledge that can be used in defining situations and exposed to tests in communicative action' (1987c:133).

At the same time, however, the increasing complexity of modernisation brings with it an extension of the regulatory functions of the steering systems of capitalist economy and bureaucratic power. The irony is that 'The rationalisation of the lifeworld makes possible the emergence and growth of subsystems whose independent imperatives turn back destructively upon the lifeworld itself' (1987c: 186). The system world is seen as encroaching upon or colonising the lifeworld to the extent that given ways of thinking are hidden 'in the pores of communicative action' (1987c: 187). The imperatives of system world are variously understood as owing their features to the structures of formal or instrumental rationality, growing specialisation and expert systems, a process of rigidification of norm-free ways of seeing the world steered by media sub-systems, resulting in a fragmentation of consciousness and a loss of meaning. Although the general drift of this critique has much in common with critical theorists prominent in the educational field (e.g. Apple 1995, Kellner undated), the application of Habermassian critical theory thinking to educational practices is not extensive. This paper makes some moves towards trying to explore the implications of operationalising Habermassian concepts, including those dealing with the exercise of power in educational settings. What Habermas seems to offer is not only the critique, but also a way out of the pessimism that the critique leads us towards: the ideological straightjacketing of lifeworlds can be overcome by the same kinds of processes of rationality that generated expert knowledge and bureaucratic systems. To apply this thinking to educational contexts requires us to conceptualise the educational field in lifeworld terms (to imagine education as a lifeworld within the lifeworld), and thence to think of the actors in educational contexts as displaying both this potential to break out of the constraints of their current taken-for-granted understandings and to be able to isolate and analyse those aspects of lifeworld that are systems driven and not necessarily in the interests of the actors in that lifeworld. The concept of lifeworld is also useful because it draws our attention

towards the particular contexts and practices, traditions and norms in the educational field that serve as background assumptions for actors.

Habermas mounts a defence against relativism that can be detected in his discussions of the second category of knowledge constitutive interest: the practical interest. In our everyday attempts to work together to agree on collective actions in the world, we demonstrate a communicative rationality, the process of which is universal, even though the contents and focus of such communicative action are locally and linguistically bounded. Communicative action takes place in a lifeworld that '.... forms a horizon and at the same time offers a store of things taken for granted in the given culture from which communicative participants draw consensual interpretive patterns in their efforts at interpretation. The solidarities of groups integrated by values and the competences of socialised individuals belong, as do culturally ingrained background assumptions, to the components of the lifeworld' (19987b: 298). The *processes* of communicative action, within different linguistically and culturally bounded life worlds are the same: Habermas is arguing for the universality of rational processes by which actors attempt to come to agreement on what is true and right. Thus it is always a possibility that social actors guided by very different background assumptions can reach agreement. This same 'root of rationality' is also the potential source of resistance to colonisation of lifeworld by the formal rationalities of power (bureaucracy) and money (capitalist economics). These potentials for agreement and critique are also taken here to be fundamental to the application of his ideas to educational contexts.

Now to return to the notion of different knowledge-constitutive interests. In communicative action, we as actors refer to three 'worlds': the 'objective' world ('the totality of entities concerning which true propositions are possible' 1996a: 310); a normative world in which we feel obligations; a subjective world we can either disclose or conceal. And in referring to those worlds we make claims that can be subjected to the rules for judging validity that apply to those worlds: rules that apply to truth claims, those that apply to claims to what is right or just and those that apply to judging our authenticity and intentions as participants in communicative action. The basis of such judgements is the notion of intersubjective agreement, a pragmatic position that Habermas claims does not have to lead to a relativistic notion of truth,

because, as Cooke (in Habermas 1999) observes, Habermas has developed a notion of truth as a 'process' and a regulative idea, the mechanisms of which – the propositional structure of knowledge; the teleological structure of action and the communicative structure of speech (Habermas 1996a) – provide the roots of a universal human rationality. Here, in a discussion of the 'idealising presuppositions' of communicative action, is a different way of expressing the notion of an underlying common rationality potential:

'We encounter a different kind of idealization in the interpersonal relationships of language users who take one another 'at their word' and hold one another to 'be answerable'. In their cooperative dealings with one another, they must mutually expect one another to be rational, at least provisionally' (Habermas, 2005: 94).

In other words, when we enter into a rational discourse aimed at reaching agreement and understanding with other actors, each participant has to assume each party has an equally valid rational position on the matter of the discourse for any communication to proceed. This does not, of course, preclude the possibility that another's rational stance is a deception and that there are in fact other motives for the interaction. For a fuller discussion of the issues here, see Habermas (1996a) for an exploration of illocutionary and perlocutionary communication. However, the mutual assumption of a valid rationality helps us to frame the communicative action that can take place in the educational field, such as that between educators espousing different ideological positions: no discourse can take place at all between such parties if the idealising supposition of mutual rationality does not apply. Where it does not apply (as is often the case) other forms of action are resorted to, often entailing the use of some kind of force (imposition, resistance). Again, one would hope that there remains a place for the rational pursuit of questions of truth and rightness in the formation of our educational goals and ideals!

In 'Some Further Clarifications of the Concept of Communicative Rationality' (1996a) Habermas introduces a modified construct of knowledge-constitutive interests when he outlines the various dimensions of reflexivity that enable us to obtain the distance from our everyday 'natural attitude' that is part of taking up the 'theoretical

stance'. Here, he talks about these forms of reflexivity as forms of self-relation:

- the epistemic self-relation (reflexivity to our own beliefs and convictions);
- the technical-practical self-relation (reflexivity to our own instrumental interventions in the objective world and success-oriented dealings with others);
- the moral-practical self-relation (reflexivity to our own norm-regulated actions); and
- an existential self-relation (reflexivity to our own life project).

For Habermas '…a person's ability to distance himself in this way in these various dimensions from himself and his expressions is a necessary condition of his *freedom*' (310). Here, then, on the level of self rather than the intersubjective is the same kind of framework, reminiscent of the discussion of knowledge constitutive interests and of the 'three worlds', which provides a structure within which we can theorise, with each part of the structure having its own concerns, procedures for argumentation and standards for evaluating validity. The same model and constructs can thus be used as an analytical frame for introspective discourse as for intersubjective discourse.

From these preliminary considerations, we might interpret Habermas' concept of theorising as the modes in which we can, as individuals (reflexively) and collectivities (intersubjectively through mutual construction of understandings and agreements) gain some degree of control of the lifeworld. Through reflection and rational discourse we are able to agree on what is the case or what should be done and from such agreements we are able to act upon the world. For Habermas, the lifeworld has both individual-internal and intersubjective-external connotations, but his work privileges the latter:

'Subjects acting communicatively always come to an understanding in the horizon of a lifeworld. Their lifeworld is formed from more or less diffuse, always unproblematic, background convictions. This lifeworld background serves as a source of situation definitions that are presupposed by participants as unproblematic. In their interpretive accomplishments the members of a communication community demarcate the one objective world and their intersubjectively shared

social world from the subjective worlds of individuals and (other) collectives' (1984: 70).

What interests me is the potential for using frameworks derived from Habermas' thinking for exploring the intersubjective engagement of educators (with learners, colleagues, other interested parties) and as procedural guides for exploring educational issues. The latter has been the subject of a previous paper (Garland 2007) so here I will confine myself to the former potential: the use of a framework based on Habermassian theory as a tool for the evaluation of practice by individuals (reflectively) and collectivities (intersubjectively).

To continue: for Habermas understanding, and especially mutual understanding, is seen as an accomplishment, the more so as our cultural stock of knowledge becomes increasingly 'decentred' (Habermas 1984: 70). Indeed, the 'decentration of world understanding and the rationalisation of the lifeworld are necessary conditions for an emancipated society' (1984: 74). By decentring, Habermas means the way in which actors must move away from their own local contexts of action when considering questions of what is true or right: 'An absolute claim to validity has to be justifiable in ever wider forums, before an ever more competent and larger audience, against ever new objections. This intrinsic dynamic of argumentation, the progressive decentring of one's interpretative perspective, in particular drives practical discourse ….' (2005: 109). Decentring is thus an essential aspect of the mode of theorising we are constructing here: the questioning of previously held certainties; attempts to resolve ethical dilemmas; imagining how others might construe an educational issue differently – all require actors to loosen themselves from the bounds of individual experience and local taken-for-granteds and be charitable towards the assumed rationality and possible worthiness of other positions. The capacity to 'decentre' and take the theoretical attitude is open to all social actors, but is clearly not necessarily taken advantage of by all. This capacity is an essential attribute of the theoretical stance and has special functions for educators and educational researchers because of their particular (though not exclusive) responsibilities for the well-being and development of other members of society.

Countering this potential for decentring, the lifeworld of cultural assumptions and pre-existing knowledge can also be a potential prison

in which the naive perspective of the natural attitude dominates. Paradoxically, Habermas sees those very same rational processes and structures which define our universal humanity as the mechanisms whereby we can free ourselves from the natural attitude through the process of discourse and subject aspects of that lifeworld to a more rigorous process of truth, validity and authenticity claims: 'With this model of action we are supposing that participants in interaction can now mobilise the rationality potential – which according to our previous analysis resides in the actor's three relations to the world [objective, social and subjective] – expressly for the cooperatively pursued goal of reaching understanding.' (1984: 99). Similarly, elsewhere he refers to these relations to the world as springing from 'the rational infrastructure of human language, cognition and action' (1990: 23).

It is not my purpose to explore the many aspects of this formulation of knowledge-constitution here, nor to deal with the criticisms levelled, except perhaps to acknowledge that the implication taken by some that all natural science is instrumentalist (the practical or technical interest) is demonstrably untrue (see, for example Hammersley, 2003). What is of interest here is the way the typology of knowledge constitutive interest can be operationalised in relation to the three 'worlds' predicated – the objective, the social and the subjective – as a practical tool for educators to help frame their thinking about educational practices.

We have then an action theory based upon a central understanding of the capacity of humans who use communication to solve problems and come to agreements in a lifeworld which is increasingly susceptible to rationalisation through the ability of participants to theorise their lifeworld, using the very communicative tools which have constructed that lifeworld. There are, in addition, the paradoxical effects of an instrumentalist rationality that distorts the lifeworld through the 'steering systems' of capitalism and bureaucratic power, the discussion of which preoccupies the second volume of the *Theory of Communicative Action* (1987c). This raises the issue of how actors can penetrate the ideological within the lifeworld and resist colonisation of thought and practice by systems that are driven by money and power. In Habermas, taking the theoretical attitude of discourse ethics is the way in which ideological distortions can be problematised, exposed and transcended.

In the theory of communicative action, the validity of any truth claim is judged according to the 'rules' that apply:

'The concept of reaching an understanding suggests a rationally motivated agreement among participants that is measured against criticisable validity claims. The validity claims (propositional truth, normative rightness, and subjective truthfulness) characterise different categories of a knowledge embodied in symbolic expressions' (1984: 75).

Habermas proposes a theory of argumentation in which 'normative claims to validity are *analogous to truth claims*' (1990: 56) and this resemblance is seen in his insistence that valid norms must deserve recognition by all concerned. This leads to the position that, 'Only those norms can claim to be valid that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all affected in their capacity *as participants in a practical discourse*' (1990: 60). The form of discourse that ensues in the attempt to reach agreement on what ought to be done and what can be agreed on as true is characterised by Habermas as a movement beyond the normal taken-for-grantedness of everyday communicative action: 'By entering into a process of moral argumentation, the participants continue their communicative action in a reflexive attitude with the aim of restoring a consensus that has been disrupted' (1990: 67). In other words, the Kantian categorical imperative has been modified to include the need to submit our validity claim to others 'for purposes of discursively testing its claim to universality' (1990: 67). Here, Habermas is referring to what he calls elsewhere (2005) an 'idealising presupposition' in that for a validity claim to be agreed all would have to be participants in such a discourse. The conditions for such discourse, outlined in Habermas (2005: 106-7) and summarised below, can be taken as the ideal conditions of educational discourse:

1. inclusiveness: no one who could make a relevant contribution should be excluded;
2. everyone should have the same opportunity to speak;
3. there should be no deception on the part of the participants; and
4. there should be no coercion: only the force of the better argument should prevail.

To summarise, the concepts from Habermas discussed so far can provide a framework for understanding the task of reflection on practice

as a theoretical stance taken by the practitioner that involves attaining some distance from the 'natural attitude' the educator takes when in the performative mode of everyday action. The notion of different 'worlds (objective, intersubjective, subjective), each entailing different ontologies and epistemologies, provides us with a framework for examining validity claims by helping us identify which category of claim we are dealing with and, consequently, what 'rules' for judging validity might apply. The framework can be operated on both a personal, reflective level and on an intersubjective, discursive level and thus can be used by educators to examine and question practice in a number of ways. His theory of communicative action requires us to accept the idealising presuppositions that humans are competent, rational and capable of reaching agreement over matters of truth and morality. The optimism of his stance is a suitable position for educators to adopt in that it implies: a) faith in our capacity to accumulate knowledge (though this knowledge is always open to revision); b) an inclusive rather than confrontational process of conducting educational discourse; and c) a belief in human competence and rationality that aligns well with the fundamental values of educators as expressed in the aspirations of educational proposals throughout the world (aspirations for democracy, citizenship, participation, social responsibility etc).

If we take intersubjective contexts first, the application of these concepts entails the idealising presupposition that the educational setting is viewed as an 'ideal speech situation' or 'unrestricted communication community' (1990: 88). It is only by adopting this position that the rest of the framework can be applied. Clearly, as Habermas frequently reminds us, the reality of much of social life is that other forms of action, especially strategic action with its associations with force, deception and winners-losers is uppermost. The educational field is hardly exempted from such observations. Yet, however loosely defined, teachers share a lifeworld of common practices, the majority of which form the background assumptions of their practice. Of course there is much conflict, for example between competing discourses of child- and subject-centredness; between liberalising and disciplinary roles of educators; between notions of education as outcome and education as process. Within the lifeworld of an educational establishment such as a school, such competing discourses may become a focus of attention and discourse in the theoretical mode that Habermas describes. Whilst the character of such discourse might be more 'adversarial' than consensual

in aim and tone (Alexander 1997), there is also an underlying desire to reach agreement in much educational discourse that demonstrates the fundamental principle of communicative action. I am suggesting here that the practices of education, at any level, should be governed by the desire to reach mutual understandings through communicative action. Before developing this argument, I need to recognise other forms of action.

Habermas distinguishes communicative action from the following other forms of action: teleological (deciding among alternative courses with the intention of achieving an aim); strategic (the agent has to take into account at least one other actor's likely decisions); normatively regulated (the agent must comply with a norm of behaviour); and dramaturgical (presentation of self to a social group). When we consider these other forms, it is clear that communicative action does not necessarily dominate either the school or the higher education institution's normal mode of discourse, though it exists at least as one of the layers of communication within the discursive space of an institution. However, I believe that most if not all educators would agree that communicative action, as defined below is our ideal desired form of communication in educational settings:

> 'communicative action refers to the interaction of at least two subjects capable of speech and action who establish interpersonal relations (whether by verbal or by extra-verbal means). The actors seek to reach an understanding about the action situation and their plans of action in order to coordinate their actions by way of agreement. The central concept of *interpretation* refers in the first instance to negotiating definitions of the situation which admit of consensus' (1984: 86).

The framework suggested so far, however, lacks sufficient theorisation of the power dynamics of educational settings. In his exploration of the concept of the public sphere (Habermas 1997), Habermas refers to 'specialised systems of action and knowledge that are differentiated within the lifeworld' (1997: 360). These systems are divided into two kinds: those such as religion, education and the family which become generally associated with the reproductive functions of the lifeworld; and those such as science, morality and art that 'take up different validity aspects of everyday communicative action (truth, rightness or

veracity)' (1997: 360). Whilst the first systems are thought of as functional, the second kind refers to a third feature of communicative action: that of the 'social space generated in communicative action' (1997: 360).

In terms of educational contexts, we could now apply these concepts, albeit ambiguously, to formulate an action theory perspective on educational practices. Firstly we have, in the latest part of this exposition, the beginnings of a suggestion that the educational setting can be viewed from a number of perspectives: from a functionalist perspective, we can examine the reproductive functions of educational processes; from a knowledge generation perspective educational institutions espouse values such as the importance of seeking truth, debating and agreeing what is right, and honesty and integrity in carrying out educational discourse. Although the public sphere is intended by Habermas to refer to the 'network for communicating information and points of view' (1997: 360), a space within the lifeworld that offers the possibility of communicative action, it is of course also subject to manipulation and steering by specialist systems such as pressure groups and other groups whose intentions are not transparent (strategic action). At an initial level, then, wehave a model that captures the notion of educational functions, purposes and possibilities:

educational functions	**educational values**
Reproduction of established forms of knowledge e.g. transmission of a body of knowledge deemed foundationally important.	Creating new knowledge. Theory development. Theory testing.
Reproduction of values considered desirable e.g. democratic values, citizenship, rights and responsibilities.	Discursive search for solutions to ethical issues and dilemmas. Anticipation of ethical consequences of new knowledge e.g. genetics.
Social reproduction e.g. sorting and categorising people according to standards of achievement; setting; streaming; academic pathways.	Critique of established practices. Analysis of ideological aspects of what is held to be obvious or true. Questioning the justice of established practices.

In addition, we can incorporate the notion of reflexivity discussed earlier, we have a basic model, derived from some of the key concepts in the work of Habermas for conducting an analysis of educational practices in relation to the truth claims, the normative elements and the intentions of the actors participating in that practice. Below I attempt an initial sketching out of the kinds of questions that might be used to operationalise this action theory for analysis of educational practices.

For any given educational practice (an assessment regime, a curriculum, a lesson, a teaching practice etc), we might ask the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the learning activity here?
2. Is there clarity about what is to be learnt or is there unpredictability? How does the clarity/ambiguity relate to the content and purposes of the learning?
3. Are we engaged in primarily a reproduction of unquestioned 'truth'? If so, what are the rules for judging the adequacy with which that knowledge is transferred? Are the outcomes clear and measurable?
4. Are we engaged in knowledge and theory construction? Is there an element of newness (for all) that marks this activity out as in some ways unpredictable? If so, by what standards do we judge the efficacy of the process? Can we talk about outcomes at all? If the activity involves exploration or theory testing, can we judge the adequacy of the processes undertaken?
5. Can I articulate my position on the nature of the learning activity? Are there a number of positions that I am holding at the same time? Can I hold these different positions with integrity or is there a conflict? How do I deal with this conflict? Is it possible to act without a resolution?
6. What are the key values being promoted or explored?
7. If reproduction of values, are these considered desirable by those taking part (e.g. democratic values, citizenship, rights and responsibilities)?
8. Does the practice entail a discursive search for solutions to ethical issues and dilemmas? Does it entail anticipation of ethical consequences of new knowledge?
9. Am I able to articulate these values? Am I able to hold these values at a distance for the purpose of validity testing and

discussion? Or are some of these values unquestionable? Am I in conflict with the values that are to be promoted?

10. To what extent does this educational practice contribute to the reproduction of wider social processes or structures?
11. Is the function of this practice primarily social reproduction e.g. sorting and categorising people according to standards of achievement; setting; streaming; academic pathways?
12. Does the practice include critique of established practices? Is the justice of established practices questioned?
13. If the practice has wider social implications, are there issues of injustice here? If so am I implicated?
14. What is the dominant mode of educational practice here? Is it communicative action? Imposition? Deception?
15. How does my analysis here fit with my own personal sense of integrity? What must I do to secure that integrity if it is threatened?
16. What are the implications for action of our answers to the questions above?

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Quality Assurance, Action Research and the Concept of a Reflective Practitioner

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1 Introduction

The effectiveness of teaching in schools would be substantially improved if teaching were a research-based profession and if educational practitioners were to play a central role in carrying out educational research. In the field of education (as well as in the humanities and social sciences), two paradigms of scientific research were developed in the past. Reflecting their attributes, they are respectively referred to as quantitative and qualitative. In the present article, the expression 'paradigm' is used in the sense of Kuhn's contemporary definition of a scientific paradigm. According to Kuhn, paradigms are 'the series of reciprocally connected assumptions about social phenomena, providing the philosophical and notional frame for studying them' (Kuhn 1974, p. 39). Therefore, a paradigm is the sum of the values, convictions and assumptions that, with regard to a particular scientific discipline, indicate which values, beliefs, convictions, assumptions, laws etc., are shared by the adherents to a certain scientific paradigm, and according to which the adherents form their tradition of scientific research.

Quantitative research, with its empirical analytical methodology and unidirectional or linear research process, models research on the natural sciences. The basis of quantitative research is the belief that there is a reality led by stable natural laws, independent of people and waiting to be discovered. Its objective is to reach reliable, exact, precise, measurable, verifiable and objective observations, which in the social sciences would have the same value as findings in the natural sciences. In quantitative research, the research problem is handled part by part. We approach different aspects of the phenomenon and deal with individual variables but on a larger number of units, most frequently on a representative sample of a population, since our tendency is to generalise the established observations. The use of the standardised

research instruments, application of statistical methods, forming hypotheses and their reliable verification are some of the main methodological principles of the empirical-analytical methodology.

With the expression 'qualitative research' we denote that kind of research where the basic empirical material, collected in the research process, consists of verbal descriptions or narratives. Further, the collected material is worked on and analysed in words without numerical operations (Mesec 1998). According to Creswell, qualitative research is a research process designed on a clear methodological tradition of research where researchers build a complex, holistic framework so that they analyse narratives and observations, conducting the research work in the habitat (Creswell 1998, p. 15). The researcher is directly included in the environment, which helps him observe the object of the research. In this context, the researcher should be aware of the fact that with their participation and the researched situation itself they influence the happening which they are observing. Further, we also attach attributes to qualitative research such as the phenomenological approach, the use of hermeneutical procedures of explanation, an orientation towards the process and the dynamic. Qualitative analysis is finalised by forming a grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss 1967) which reads as a narrative of a phenomenon which was the subject of the study.

It needs to be stressed that the role of the researcher and the person studied differ in the qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The quantitative paradigm typically defines the role of a person studied – e.g., teachers – as mainly limited to data acquisition and the introduction of those changes established by other researchers into practice. In order to ensure the highest level of objectivity (as well as validity and reliability), in quantitative research there is a demand to separate the research object from the research subject. This puts the researcher in charge of the research process, whereas the person studied primarily represents the source of information. It is typical of the qualitative paradigm that the researcher and those being researched formulate the studied situation together, which means that teachers are supposed to participate in planning, data collection, data processing, interpretation, and informing the public about the study's results. The qualitative paradigm sees education as a historical process and as a lived experience for those involved in educational processes and institutions (cf. Kemmis

2007, p. 179). Its form of reasoning is practical; it aims to transform the consciousness of practitioners and, by so doing, to give them grounds upon which to reform their own practices. Its interest is in transforming education by educating practitioners.

The person who is in an ideal position to carry out educational research is the educational practitioner. At present, a tiny proportion of educational research – that is, funded research, carried out by proper procedures and then made public knowledge through publication – is undertaken by practising teachers: the vast majority of such research is conducted by university-based academics involved in teacher education who do not teach in schools (cf. Hargreaves 2007). One of the main problems of educational research conducted by academics is the dissemination of research findings to practitioners. Teachers often complain about a lack of access to the findings of educational research, and this is one of the main reasons for educational research failing to have an adequate influence on the improvement of practice. One way to change educational research so that it improves the practice of teachers in schools is changing the research agenda and research process. Changing the research agenda and research process means adopting as an essential prerequisite of improvement, the involvement of practitioners in all aspects of the research process, from the creation of strategic research plans, the selection of research priorities and the funding of projects through to the dissemination and implementation of policies and practices arising from or influenced by research findings (cf. Hargreaves 2007, p. 10).

The idea of teachers conducting research on educational practice came from the work of the 1973-1976 Ford Teaching Project in the United Kingdom, under the direction of John Elliott and Clem Adelman. This project involved teachers in collaborative action research into their own practices. Its notion of the 'self-monitoring teacher' was based on Lawrence Stenhouse's (1975) views of the teacher as a researcher and as an 'extended professional'. Stenhouse's view of educational research implies doing research as an integral part of the role of the teacher, just as a teacher who uses research into their subject as a basis for teaching implies that they do research into the subject through their teaching. Another great impetus for the development of the 'teacher as a researcher' movement was the work of David Schön, in particular his books The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action

(1983) and Educating the Reflective Practitioner (1991). The discourse of the reflective practitioner emphasises the particular skills needed to reflect constructively upon ongoing experience as a way of improving the quality and effectiveness of one's work. The discourse encourages teachers to take the whole picture into account – analysing the effectiveness of a lesson or series of lessons through an attempt to evaluate what was learned, by whom, and how more effective learning might take place in the future. As such, it involves a careful evaluation by teachers of their own classroom performance, planning, assessment and so on, in addition to and in conjunction with evaluations of the pupils´ behaviour and achievement. It also implies a sound understanding on the teacher's part of relevant educational theory and research (Moore 2007). In order for teachers to commit to research, it is vital that they become aware already during their studies that research of educational practice is one of the instruments for establishing and ensuring the quality of this practice, that they recognise research as an important factor of the professional conduct of teachers, and that they should be fully qualified for research. It is therefore essential for student-teachers to acquire the necessary knowledge in research (i.e., at least in fundamental methodological concepts and basic statistical procedures that apply to education) and to gain their first specific experience in research work. Students need the opportunity to use theoretical knowledge in methodology, for example, when developing a specific instrument for collecting data and planning their own research. Understandably, students do not normally conduct major studies on their own (e.g., on representative samples). For the purposes of their training, small-scale studies are also deemed appropriate as they may be conducted on samples that are, for example, represented by their fellow students from the same course or faculty. In this way, student-teachers learn about the applicability of statistics and methodology and gain their first experience in research already during their studies. It can be expected that those teachers who have gained positive experience and basic competencies in research already during their studies will further improve their knowledge during continuous professional training. According to Schön (1991), practitioners should: (1) participate in research of their own practice; and (2) develop educational theories that directly reflect actual educational practice. Action research, as presented below, provides an appropriate means for realising these objectives.

2 The Characteristics of Action Research

Action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of: (a) their own social or educational practices; (b) their understanding of these practices; and (c) situations in which the practices are carried out (Kemmis 2007, p. 168). The idea of action research originates from the work of social psychologist, Lewin (1946), who described research as a set of steps in a spiral, each containing planning, action, and assessment of the achieved result. Lewin documented the effects of group decision in facilitating and sustaining changes in social conduct, and emphasised the value of involving participants in every phase of the action research process. Lewin believed that research has a double function – both to produce high-quality social science and to generate applications for human betterment. One of the initiators of action research in education was Corey (1953, p. 70), who was convinced that 'the disposition to study /.../ the consequences of our own teaching is more likely to change and improve our practices than is reading about what someone else has discovered of his teaching.' Educational action research is a form of educational research which places control over processes of educational reform in the hands of those involved in the action. Educational practitioners must play a central role in carrying out action research if its relevance is to be assured. The role of outsiders, such as university academics and school counselling service, can only be as collaborators, providing assistance. On Stenhouse´s account 'In action research real classrooms have to be our laboratories, and they are in the command of teachers, not of researchers' (Stenhouse et al. 1979, p. 20). For teachers who wish to perform action research it is assumed that in addition to their willingness and motivation to undertake research they also have the possibility or professional autonomy to make the decisions necessary for the research (e.g., implementation of changes in the educational and training process) (cf. Fraenkel & Wallen 2006, p. 568).

In action research the researcher prepares a flexible indicative research plan which has to be updated throughout the entire research. The plan of the entire action research divides individual realisable action steps whereby each step is oriented towards activity with specific objectives. The action researcher will embark on a course of action strategically (deliberately experimenting with practice while aiming simultaneously

for an improvement in the practice, understanding of the practice and the situation in which the practice occurs); monitor the action, the circumstances in which it occurs, and its consequences; and then retrospectively reconstruct an interpretation of the action in context as a basis for future action. Knowledge achieved in this way informs and refines both specific planning in relation to the practice being considered and the practitioner's general practical theory (Kemmis 2007, p. 173). Action research is not distinguished by the use of a particular set of research techniques. It is true, however, that in general the techniques for generating and accumulating evidence about practices, and the techniques for analysing and interpreting this evidence more closely resemble the techniques employed by qualitative researchers than empirical-analytical researchers. These methods place the practitioner on centre stage in the educational research process: actors' understandings are crucial in understanding educational action. One of the central techniques recommended in the reflective practitioner discourse is the keeping of diaries or journals by teachers (Moore 2007, p. 122) in which they reflect systematically on their experiences as they perceive them, keeping a record that can be returned to and re-examined in the light of subsequent experiences and providing scope for the self-setting of targets and goals.

Action research is usually carried out in a single school or class. It is important that the description and analysis of the course of the action research, as well as the results achieved, are published and made publicly accessible. With the proper description of the execution of action research the reader obtains a model of how the participants studied a specific situation, solved dilemmas, and improved the quality of pedagogical practice, as well as influencing the circumstances that ensure a higher quality educational process. While remaining cognisant of their own circumstances, the reader can transfer the results of the action research to their educational practice by taking that which makes sense and acting according to it or by adapting the findings to the characteristics of their own specific situation.

3 Empirical research

3.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Study

In this section we answer the following research questions: (1) Which factors, in the teachers' opinion, cause a gap between research institutions and school practice? (2) Which factors, in the teachers' opinion, could contribute to an increase in the research work of teachers? (3) Are there any statistically significant differences between those teachers who have prior experience with research work and those who do not, in terms of their willingness to co-operate in research work in the future? (4) Are there any statistically significant differences between those teachers who have prior experience with research work and those who do not as to which phase of the research process they are willing to take part in?

In so doing, we will rely on data collected by means of a questionnaire implemented within empirical research aimed at establishing the degree to which teachers are involved in research work and the views they hold about research.

3.2 Description of the Sample

Our research was conducted on a purposive sample. The questionnaire was completed by 274 teachers teaching at partner institutions, of whom 87.8% were women and 12.2% men. More than half of the interviewed teachers (58.4%) work in primary schools and almost one-quarter (23.3%) in secondary schools. Of those taking part in the research, more than one-tenth (14.1%) are educational workers who work in pre-school educational institutions and 5.2% work in other institutions (e.g., secondary school boarding homes, libraries, institutions for children with special needs). The average age of the teachers interviewed is 40.87 years (with a standard deviation of 7.74 years). On average, they have 17.58 years of work experience (a standard deviation of 8.93 years). Approximately one-half of the teachers interviewed (51.9%) hold a university degree and one-quarter (25.2%) have completed high school education. One-tenth of the educational workers interviewed (10.0%) have a secondary-level education while less than one-tenth of the teachers (9.3%) have completed higher professional education. Of the

teachers interviewed, 3.7% have completed a specialist, master's or doctoral degree.

3.3 The Data Collecting Procedure

Data collecting was carried out in September 2006. We prepared a questionnaire composed of four evaluation scales: about factors that influence the level to which the teachers are involved in educational research in schools; about factors that, in the teachers' opinion, cause a gap between research institutions and school practice; about factors that could contribute to an increase in the research work of teachers; and about the teachers' willingness to co-operate in individual phases of the research process. The questionnaire also included three semantic differentials (which characteristics teachers ascribe to research, to an average teacher and to an average researcher), a set of questions with which we tried to determine the teachers' opinion on how much knowledge they had obtained about research during their studies and programmes of continuous professional training.

In the present article we will only show the data collected with an evaluation scale about the teachers' willingness to co-operate in individual phases of the research process (S 1), with an evaluation scale about the gap between research institutions and school practice (S 2) and with an evaluation scale about the factors that could contribute to an increase in the research work of teachers (S 3). On the basis of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, the evaluation scales reached a sufficient level of reliability (S 1: $\alpha = 0.87$, S 2: $\alpha = 0.68$, S 3: $\alpha = 0.86$) and validity (with the first factor we explain: S 1: 52.16%, S 2: 31.51%, S 3: 38.45% of the variance). Validity was additionally checked by factor analysis. According to the law $r_{tt} \geq \sqrt{h^2}$, the evaluation scales (S 1: $r_{tt} = 0.82$, S 2: $r_{tt} = 0.80$, S 3: $r_{tt} = 0.72$) have a good level of validity.

3.4 Methodology

In the empirical research we employed the causal-nonexperimental method of educational research. The data from the questionnaires were processed using methods of descriptive and inferential statistics. The statistical procedures employed were: frequency distribution (f, f%) of

the attributive variables, basic descriptive statistics of the numerical variables (mean, standard deviation), the χ^2-test of hypothesis independence, Levene's test for homogeneity of variance (F-test), a t-test for an independent sample, a factor analysis to test the instrument validity (% of explained variance with the first factor) and reliability (% of explained variance with common factors), as well as Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient as a measure of instrument reliability. The data is represented in tabular form.

4 Results and interpretation

How can the gap between research institutions and school practice be bridged?

In view of the fact that also amongst the Slovenian public one often comes across the opinion that there is a gap between research institutions and school practice, or that the findings of researchers do not reach teachers, we asked the teachers to assess the degree to which individual reasons, in their judgement, influence the gap between researchers (research institutions) and teachers (school practice). The teachers assessed the reasons on a five-level assessment scale, where 5 indicates the reason has a very significant influence on the fact that the findings of researchers to not reach teachers, and 1 indicates that the reason is not significant.

In the opinion of the respondent teachers, the most significant reason conditioning the gap between research institutions and school practice is that researchers have poor knowledge of school practice and actual conditions ($\bar{x}$ = 4.38) and that in their reports researchers place too little emphasis on practical instructions concerning how the research findings can be applied in practice, or that they provide too few concrete examples ($\bar{x}$ = 4.34). Knowledge about teaching and learning has traditionally been divided into theoretical knowledge (written about and published by university scholars) and practical knowledge (´intuitively understood´ by teachers). This dichotomy served to alienate teachers from research, including studying their own profession (for more on this, see Smith & Sela 2005). Action research serves to bridge this gap by allowing, inviting and encouraging teachers to engage in meaningful research. According to the surveyed teachers, the poor transfer of knowledge (findings) from research to school practice is also due to the

infrequency of contact between researchers and teachers ($\bar{x}$ = 4.12), as well as to the fact that researchers do not deal with questions that are of interest to teachers, or that they treat cases that are not relevant to school practice ($\bar{x}$ = 3.83). In the final places the surveyed teachers placed reasons that relate to the ability and motivation of teachers to involve themselves in research work: teachers do not follow specialised literature often enough ($\bar{x}$ = 3.57); teachers do not know how to apply the results of research, i.e., how to implement changes in pedagogical work based on published scientific findings ($\bar{x}$ = 3.56); the incomprehensibility of scientific articles due to the style of writing and the specialised language ($\bar{x}$ = 3.38); and a lack of interest on the part of teachers in scientific and specialised findings that are not directly connected to their work ($\bar{x}$ = 3.35). For a precise interpretation of the results obtained, and in order to prepare changes that could improve co-operation between research institutions and school practice, it would be necessary in the future to also obtain answers to the same questions from researchers and those employed in research institutions. Nonetheless, the implementation of projects in which research is conceived as a collaborative process in which both teachers and researchers participate is one of the most efficient ways of contributing to linking research institutions and school practice, as well as to encouraging an improved transfer of findings. We developed this dimension of interpersonal co-operation in the project Partnership of Faculties and Schools within whose framework we also implemented the empirical research whose results are presented in the present article.

The preparedness of teachers to be involved in research work

In the continuation we determine the degree to which the teachers are involved in research, and the extent to which they are prepared to involve themselves in research work in the future. It was explained to the respondents that research is the planned and systematic acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data for the purpose of contributing to the progress of professional understanding and educational practice (cf. Bassey 1995).

We asked the teachers if they had ever conducted a study or if they had participated in any kind of research work. Among the 274 teachers surveyed, almost three-fifths (58.8%) answered that they had neither conducted nor participated in any research. More than two-fifths (41.2%)

answered that they had already conducted or participated in research. More than one-third (37.2%) were prepared to participate in research and just over one-fifth (22.6%) declined to do so. Two-fifths of the interviewed teachers (40.1%) could not decide whether they would take part in research work or not.

We were interested in the extent to which experience in research work influences a teacher's interest in further research.

Table 1. Answers from teachers with experience in research work and those without as to whether they are ready to participate in research work

	Are you prepared to participate in research work during this school year?							
	yes		no		do not know		total	
	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %
Yes. I have research work experience.	64	57.1	16	14.3	32	28.6	112	100.0
No. I do not have research work experience.	38	23.8	46	28.8	76	47.5	160	100.0
Total	102	37.5	62	22.8	108	39.7	272	100.0

Between the answers of those teachers who already have experience in research and those who do not, there are statistically significant differences in their willingness to participate further in research (χ^2 = 31.582, df = 2, P = 0.000).

More than one-half (57.1%) of the teachers who have prior research experience are also prepared to participate in research in the future. On the other hand, this willingness is expressed only by less than one-quarter (23.8%) of the teachers who do not have any research experience. Almost half of the teachers without research experience (47.5%) cannot decide whether they would like to participate in research or not. More than one-quarter (28.6%) of the teachers who have research experience remain neutral in their decisions. While more than one-tenth (14.3%) of the teachers with research experience are not prepared to participate further in research, only slightly more than one-quarter (28.8%) of the teachers without research experience are not prepared to participate further in research.

From the data presented above we may conclude that experience in research has an effect on the willingness of the teachers to do research in the future. On one hand, the data show that in more than 50% of cases teacher-researchers have had a positive experience with research. However, it would also be sensible to investigate the reasons why slightly more than one-tenth of the teachers who have already conducted research do not wish to continue this activity. These reasons may be found in specific schools with an unfavourable atmosphere for conducting research; they may also arise from a lack of research knowledge or funds, excessively ambitious and thus unfeasible plans, or from the fact that the final effects were not as good as expected relative to the effort invested.

Stages of the research process where teachers are prepared to participate

In the following sections we determine the stages of the research process where teachers are prepared to participate.

Table 2. Stages of research work where teachers who have and those who do not have research work experience are prepared to participate

	$\bar{x}$ with experience	$\bar{x}$ without experience	t	df	sig
planning of research contents (what to research, goals of the research…)	3.86	3.52	2.978	270	0.003
methodological planning of the research (research plan, the sample, the data-collecting procedure…)	3.71	3.38	2.728	270	0.007
preparation of techniques and instruments for data-collecting	3.58	3.34	2.066	211.181	0.040
data-collecting	3.95	3.78	1.618	270	0.107
processing and interpretation of the results	3.70	3.38	2.672	270	0.008
writing of reports	3.45	3.00	3.648	217.259	0.000
acquainting interested public (other teachers, parents …) with the results of the research	3.63	3.16	3.928	270	0.000
introducing the findings and improvements to school practice	4.11	3.86	2.172	270	0,.031

Teachers evaluated their willingness to participate in individual phases of the research process on a five-step grading scale. We established that teachers (regardless of their experience in research) are mostly prepared to participate in implementing observations and improvements in school practice ($\bar{x}$ = 3.97), which is understandable as teachers usually judge the value of research according to its 'applied value', i.e. the possibility to change and improve school practice. The purpose of each study is to solve a problem, which means changing practice in the widest sense possible. Next is the teachers' willingness to participate in data collection ($\bar{x}$ =3.84). An interesting fact is that teachers are largely prepared to participate in planning the content of a study – what to research, research objectives etc. ($\bar{x}$ = 3.66) than in the methodological planning of the study – the research plan, process of data collection etc. ($\bar{x}$ =3.51). We can assume that content planning relates more to them since they have greater knowledge in this field. Less interest in participation was expressed by teachers in data processing and interpretation ($\bar{x}$ = 3.50), informing the public about the research results and the preparation of techniques and instruments ($\bar{x}$ =3.36). The teachers were the least interested in writing a research report ($\bar{x}$ =3.18). Writing a research report, which requires an in-depth reflexion of the research problem, and informing the public with the results from the study are two factors which are not normally strictly bound to the teacher's everyday professional role but which significantly influence the teacher's professional development. According to Ebbutt (1985), the phase of writing a research report and presenting the results to the public, in addition to developing research questions and systematic data collection, is the main dividing line between the teacher-thinking practitioner and teacher-researcher. The teacher-researcher is expected to perform the entire research process, i.e. they will know how to formulate a research problem, analyse it in terms of research questions, hypothesise, create a plan for data collection and processing, know how to interpret the obtained data, and write a report on the course of the study.

Next we examined whether teachers with experience in research statistically significantly differ and at which stages of the research process they are prepared to participate in comparison to teachers without such experience. By taking the assumption of the homogeneity of variance into account, the T-test for independent samples (see Table 2) revealed statistically significant differences between teachers with

experience in research work and those without regarding their interest in participation in individual stages of the research process. Statistically significant differences were present in all phases of the research process, except in data collection, and teachers who had experience in research work are largely prepared to participate in all phases of the research process compared to teachers without experience in this field. Again we can say that collecting data is a step which is also present in 'traditional' or quantitative research and does not require much effort from the teacher and it is therefore understandable and expected that in this area there were no statistically significant differences among teachers with previous experience in research work and those without.

Measures for encouraging teachers to undertake research work

We also asked the respondent teachers how they thought teachers in general could be encouraged to undertake research work. We asked them to assess seven reasons on a five-level assessment scale. From the results it is evident that teachers do not more frequently undertake research primarily because they are (over)occupied with the duties they are obliged to perform at school ($\bar{x}$ = 4.28), and because the research work of teachers is not appropriately valued in a professional and financial sense ($\bar{x}$ = 4.14). Teachers are not full-time students and are unlikely to have the time to develop full and robust understandings of multiple research methods. This means that those who bring teacher research to schools must think about where teachers´ time can best be spent. Teachers are also critical of their own qualification to undertake research work ($\bar{x}$ = 3.77) and, further, believe that the pedagogical work of teachers in school is currently not conceived in such a way that research is understood as an integral part of their regular duties ($\bar{x}$ = 3.69). Regarding the qualification of teachers for research work, we refer to the following data. After the reform of the previous higher education system to university education (1987-1988) or the reorganisation of the previous Academy of Education to the Faculty of Education (1990) all teachers are required to complete a four-year university study programme where they acquire knowledge in the fundamentals of educational methodology and statistics. More than two-thirds of the interviewed teachers said that during their undergraduate studies they attended a lecture where they learned about statistics-related topics (67.9%) and methodology (69.0%). One-fifth of the interviewed teachers (20.5%) attended a training programme (seminar, workshop, lectures

etc.) on research within their ongoing professional training. The respondent teachers assessed their knowledge in statistics according to a five-step assessment scale with an average mark of 2.54 (standard deviation 1.03), their methodological knowledge with an average mark of 2.70 (standard deviation 1.09).

In the opinion of the teachers, their more frequent involvement in research would also be facilitated by a more suitable working schedule, which should be organised so as to enable research ($\bar{x}$ = 3.64). It is encouraging that amongst the reasons for not undertaking research work more frequently the teachers attributed the lowest ranking to a lack of interest of teachers in research ($\bar{x}$ = 3.56) and the prevailing atmosphere within schools ($\bar{x}$ = 3.30). The atmosphere in the school in which the research takes place is very important for conducting action research successfully. School leadership and those teachers who evaluate the research work of teachers as one of the criteria for improving educational work, and who encourage teacher-researchers and in various ways co-operate in their research work, constitute an essential pillar of quality action research.

5 Conclusion

The Common European Principles for teachers' competencies and qualifications (Zgaga 2006) provide a starting point for the modernisation of study programmes in the field of education on four principles and three sections of competencies. These principles are: (1) teaching as a highly qualified profession; (2) placed in the context of lifelong learning; (3) mobile and based on; (4) partnership. The three sections of competencies are: (a) ability to work with others; (b) ability to work with knowledge; and (c) ability to work with and in society. Further, it is extremely necessary to encourage the teacher's readiness to research and the demonstration of one's own professional practice towards the progress of new knowledge (ibid). There is ample evidence that teacher research can be a powerful factor in the lives of teacher-researchers: teacher-researchers report learning more about their students, about their schools, and about themselves; they use this knowledge to change their practice, to feel more professional, to engage 'authentically' with the profession of teaching in a new way (for more on

this, see Berger, Boles & Troen 2005). As Wilson (2000, p. 303) explains about his own teacher research efforts, 'The question is not so much "How can I teach better?" but rather "How can I organise my thinking about what is happening in my classroom to enable me to gain a deeper insight into the learning process and to maximise the effectiveness of the learning experiences I prepare for and share with my students?"' The effectiveness of teaching in schools would be substantially improved if teaching were a research-based profession and if practitioners were to take an active role in shaping the direction of educational research. In order for this to be possible teacher education must equip teachers with research-based knowledge. The critical scientific literacy of teachers and their ability to use research methods are considered to be crucial. Teacher education programmes require studies of both qualitative and quantitative research traditions. The aim of these studies is to train students to find and analyse problems they may expect to face in their future work. For the purposes of further analysis, and in order to increase participation in research work, it would also be necessary to obtain answers at least to the questions concerning which obstacles they encountered during the research process; what they experienced during the research process; in which ways they believed they had benefited from the research; what conceptions of knowledge (for more on this, see Valenčič Zuljan, 2007), and the teacher roles they brought to the research process, and so on. Most teachers are initially very intimidated by the idea of research and found it to be foreign to their own understanding. Teachers – like all new researchers – have trouble formulating researchable questions, connecting their data collection methods to the questions they are asking, and drawing conclusions from the data. Berger, Boles & Troen (2005) found that when teachers were given confidence in their researching abilities the research seemed quite simple.

The teachers' experience with research work had a significant influence on their affirmative responses to the question as to whether they would be willing to participate in research in the future. In this sense, experience in research increased the teachers' willingness to decide to take part in research at all. This was confirmed by the results presented above: more than one-half of the teachers (57.1%) who already had experience in research were also willing to co-operate in future research projects. For the teachers without prior experience in research, the same willingness was expressed by less than one-quarter (23.8%). Therefore,

we must enable teachers to gain their first experience with research work already while studying, and their pedagogical work must be planned so that it enables them to undertake research (e.g., an appropriate concept of the tasks that teachers must perform, which also includes research; partial relief of other obligations, and an appropriate adaptation of the organisational work in school; the financial and professional valuing of research work etc.). In Scandinavian countries (e.g., Finland, cf. Niemi & Jakku-Sihvonen, 2006), teacher education is based on the belief that teachers should be acquainted with the latest research in the fields of teaching and learning, that they should be able to translate research results into sound practice and, finally, that they should possess suitable academic and professional qualifications to conduct research. Evaluation projects (Jussila & Saari, 2000, Niemi, 1999) have shown that the research component plays an essential role in teacher education. The integration of research studies with other components of teacher education research methods and the writing of a master's thesis are among the best features of primary school teacher education in Finland (Niemi & Kohonen, 1995). Smith and Sela (2005) believed that the transition from student to teacher can be eased and supported by doing action research. By developing systematic reflective practice, beginning teachers can learn to integrate taught theory with actual practice. After the completion of their studies, teachers should also be provided with an opportunity to remain in contact with research work (e.g., by participating in further training seminars and various projects) and constantly upgrade their knowledge in this field in order to make research an integral part of their everyday practice. Another important factor is school culture, which should establish favourable conditions for research efforts. If school leadership offered more support and encouragement to research work in schools, and provided the necessary assistance for such work, teachers would most certainly undertake research activity more often. Berger, Boles & Troen (2005) found that the principal is a strong factor in the success or failure of teacher research, and when a strong principal left the school the research interests might not continue. For the purposes of further analysis it would also be necessary to obtain answers to the questions as whether – and in what circumstances – teacher research can have an impact on the larger culture of the school and change teaching and learning experiences for even those students and teachers not involved in the conducting research. Berger, Boles & Troen (ibid.) discovered that teacher research must be mandated for all teachers if it is to have an

impact on the culture of the school at large, and principals cannot force teachers to engage in teacher research. Readiness for inclusion in research work, the qualification to conduct action research and participation in research projects are important factors that enhance the quality of the practice of teachers. The responsibility for professional training in this field, for stimulating teachers to study their ongoing educational practice and for disseminating results should therefore not only be assumed by teachers and schools but by all institutions concerned with the training of teaching staff: faculties educating future teaching staff, educational institutions employing teaching staff and relevant state institutions.

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Research (Evaluation) Procedures of the Pre-service and In-service Education of Communication Competent Teachers

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1 Introduction: Teachers' communication competence

In the 20th century teacher professionalism was addressed through analyses of the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful teachers, including the desirable and undesirable characteristics of teachers (the earliest phase of systematic research of teachers); then research into the roles the teacher had to recognise was dominating (the second phase), while the end of the century was marked by approaches to professional development as an integral process. It is only in the 21st century that the professional competence of teachers has started to be more fully explored.

How can we describe a competent teacher? Teachers' professional competence is the system of knowledge, skills, abilities and motivational disposition which facilitate the effective realisation of professional teaching activities. The three main domains of the professional competence of teachers, which consist of a series of separate competencies (Bjekic and Zlatic, 2006) are: educational competence; programme (syllabus, content) competence and communication competence.

Communication competence is the teacher's formative professional competence. It is the system of knowledge, skills, abilities, properties and motivational disposition which enable effective communication in the teaching process and in other educational social interactions.

Communication competence is a more special construct, but one which broadly overlaps with the basic construct of social competence (Spitzberg and Cupach, 1989); it is considered to be the focal aspect of social competence since the lion's share of social interaction is carried out through communication. We focused on interpersonal and group communication (not on technological mediated communication).

Communication competence integrates two dimensions, namely cognitive and behavioural, and basic communication skills. Keatlen Reardon (1998: 76) considers the cognitive dimension as a broad concept; it consists of the awareness process and the cognitive processing of information (interpersonal awareness, social perspectives, capturing, cognitive constructs, self-monitoring, empathy etc.). The behavioural dimension indicates different manifestations of communication competence (interaction involvement, behaviour flexibility, listening, communication style, and other components of behaviour).

In a study of the professional development of education practitioners in South-East Europe (Zgaga, 2005), teachers assessed that the development of communication skills is very important (in fourth place out of 10 themes). Yet in faculties and high schools of teachers' education these competencies and skills very rarely became part of the programmes of teachers' professional improvement (coming at the end of the list of 10 themes in improvement programmes); at the same time, institutions suggest courses of teachers' professional improvement concerning teaching methods, learning and assessment, the content of academic disciplines etc. more frequently than communication contents. Teaching work does not make the spontaneous socialisation of communication competence at the communication level formative of more effective teaching interaction (Bjekic and Zlatic, 2006b). It is necessary to teach teachers' communication skills at both the initial education level for teaching work and continually in the professional domain.

2 Teachers' pre-service and in-service communication education

Considering the role of teachers, it is obvious that we want to educate teachers who will be capable of controlling and facilitating effective classroom communication, communication with their colleagues and students' parents. Teachers should develop adequate social skills, apply a wide repertoire of communication strategies, learn and understand the causes and consequences of their communication actions, develop abilities to find and apply the best communication alternatives and to make an appropriate improvisation and redefinition of the action plan, taking new movements in the social situation into consideration.

There are differences between student-teachers and current teachers in terms of their educational needs, especially as regards their insight into social situations of professional teaching in which communication competence is realised. It is therefore necessary to model specific curricula to improve the communication competencies of teachers and specific curricula for teacher-students.

In pre-service teachers' education (university courses, pre-service curricula) it is important to develop general communication knowledge, skills, and attitudes. With in-service teachers' education it is important to develop special communication skills, knowledge and attitudes in specific school and learning situations.

Some authors distinguish the goals of pre-service education and of in-service education compared with education and training. Education typically emphasises the cognitive learning domain, whereas training focuses more on the behavioural learning domain. Differences between pre-service education (by analogy to Beebe's concept education) and in-service training include the following (Beebe, 2007: 250): (a) education emphasises knowing, training emphasises doing; (b) education emphasises achieving systematic communication knowledge and skills, training emphasises achieving a certain level of skill attainment; (c) education operates more as an open system in that what is taught has multiple applications in a variety of contexts, training is more of a closed system in which there are certain right or wrong ways of performing a skill to accomplish a specific task; (d) education is typically linked to achieving a wide range of behaviour, training emphasises requirements to perform a specific job; (e) training emphasises analysing how to perform skills following a prescribed, step-by-step approach; education is typically less concerned with performing a linear sequence of behaviours. What are the differences between preparing for a communication training presentation in in-service teachers' education and teaching a university-level communication class in pre-service teachers' education? Although both a classroom and training room may include similar instructional activities, what is presented in a training session should have a direct correlation with what trainees need to do on the job. Effective training should be based upon a comprehensive assessment of trainee and organisational needs.

The education of communication competent teachers involves varying parts in teacher education systems. In the last ten years, there has been much interest in the higher education community to redefine teacher

training curricula in order to implement new communication skills and competencies. The complexity of communication education in teachers' pre-service education and teachers' in-service education is caused by the structure of communication competence.

2.1 Development of communication education and teaching communication

The contents of and courses from communicology were gradually included in university teacher education. Based on the specific contents and key significance of communication skills in learning communication, two models of communication curricula are developed. The evaluation of teaching communication is analysed: we especially analysed the difficulties of behavioural evaluation as a necessary part of monitoring teaching communication effects.

At the beginning of teaching as regards the teacher's communication competence, some programmes are similar to training in the field of business communication, while others are based on a direct transfer from socio-psychological knowledge to the teacher's professional dealing. The latest systematic curriculum development is based on teachers' job analyses, needs analyses, analyses of teaching social interaction and instructional goals and outcomes. The initialisation and realisation of these teaching communication activities started in the middle of the 20th century. At the end of the 1970s, the socio-psychological perspective was more important for modifying teaching communication. Afterwards, there was the prominent influence of different conceptualisations leading towards the defining of curricula and selection of syllabi for the development of communication competence.

The learning of communication skills of different professional groups at first became part of their professional improvement**.** It is initiated by the needs of business systems (Adler and Elmhorst, 2004). Learning communication competencies has more recently been involved in the regular educational process. These instructional contents became part of university education in the mid-20th century (Barton and Beck, 2005; Morreale and Backlund, 2002). At the end of the 20th century, when communicology became an autonomous science, the course at the university education level was named 'communicology' (the course includes both learning the theoretical principles of communication, and

learning communication skills). Since then, specific courses have been derived from and named after the specific communication skills to be developed (interpersonal classroom communication, team communication, mass communication, internal communication, external communication).

Realising the need for more detailed operational communication competence, the National Communication Association of the USA (Larson et al. 1978; Quianthz, 1990) supported the development and further effectiveness of competencies, which referred to communication aptitudes and speaking and listening skills. After conducting analyses at more than 500 universities, various vocational conferences and through different communication associations, communication competence was viewed as a system of essential and basic communication skills which were expected as a result and a demand of general education during the first two years of university; that system was offered as a pivot for the development of communication curricula.

A key dilemma in formulating a curriculum for the development of the communication competence of teachers and future teachers is the issue of ratio of theory and skills involved in the curriculum. Nicholson and Duck (in Vangelisti, 1999: 85-99) resolve this dilemma by pointing out the advantages of a skills-oriented curriculum; however, without disregarding the impact and necessity of a lecture-oriented curriculum. The skills-oriented course is probably the most effective with high levels of the discussion of issues and ideas; students are encouraged to recognise the relevant communication processes and phenomena in their own relationships and interactions; they are encouraged to recognise, analyse, and respond to situations in their life more effectively; they are encouraged to participate, offer examples from their experience, and discuss them; students recognise the practical usefulness of these courses in professional activities etc. In such curricula, more time is devoted to activities, practice and to the self-evaluation of specific communication competencies.

In setting the goals of curricula for encouraging communication competencies Sprague (in Vangelisti et al. 1999: 15-31) highlights the practical benefits and effectiveness of Bloom's model of taxonomy. In teaching communication, a teacher must direct the process of learning towards all levels of recognition and fields of learning, then they must observe and evaluate the hierarchical order of the development of skills, including to evaluate what has been realised in the teaching process.

Communicology curricula of teachers' pre-service education include the interpersonal communication level as the main part of the development of communication competent teachers. Mortenson (2007) emphasised that the curricula of interpersonal communication incorporate philosophy, ethics and exercises geared toward personal growth and awareness; most interpersonal communication courses take a transformative approach. The use of ideas and exercises designed to promote personal growth, empowerment and self-reflection is being incorporated in IP textbooks and, presumably, IP courses as well.

Analyses of the curricula at different universities (Bjekic et al. 2007) suggest that the most common contents in these curricula are the following: model of communication, characteristics of messages in teaching, channel of teaching communication, verbal communication, nonverbal communication, active listening, conversation, interpersonal communication, communication in a small group and class, teachers' communication styles and styles of teaching management, communication boundaries, communication rules, assertiveness, and empathy.

Specific contents in some courses involves: communicology and disciplines, theoretical issues of communication, written communication, discussion styles, group discussion, debate, group presentation, public speaking, critical listening, skills of problem-resolving, strategies of conflict resolving, communication in a school team, teachers' communication and managing styles, non-violence and personalised communication, correspondence etc. Some curricula emphasise the development of oral competencies of student-prospective teachers as the main domain of communication professional development.

Some curricula suggest the acquisition of communication skills, yet most communication curricula suggest a complex approach to developing communication competencies.

2.2 Status of communication education in the teachers' education system in Serbia

Programmes of development of communication competencies were gradually taking place in the teacher education system in Serbia.

Today the development of communication competent teachers is also one of the objectives and outcomes of professional development courses of current teacher and university institutions which produce prospective teachers. Teaching specific teacher communication competencies first began as part of a development programme, which were special types of trainings. The integration of such programmes into the initial education of teachers gradually started to be implemented not before the beginning of the 21st century and specific syllabi with the intention of promoting the communication competence of prospective teachers have been incorporated in students' syllabi for the past three to four years. In six faculties of primary school teachers' education in Serbia, only nine courses of social and communication content existed 10 years ago. Now, there are 28 courses with social and communication contents at the same university departments.

At the faculties where primary school teachers are educated curricula about the field of the development of communication competence are present in two ways:

- they are included as special curricular fields in the courses: Educational Psychology, Developmental Psychology, School Pedagogy, Didactics, Teaching Practice etc; and
- there are separate courses whose main result is the development of communication competence: Fundaments of Communicology, Communication, Mass Communication etc.

On the other hand, faculties which educate experts in education-related jobs (school psychologist, teachers at the vocational education level etc.) have established student programmes which define curricula whose objective is to develop communication science and skills. The faculties which mostly educate prospective teachers still do not pay enough attention to general teacher education; they also do not pay any special attention to the development of the communication competence of prospective teachers. At the faculty of teachers' education, some parts of the curricula related to the field of communicology have been included in psychology and pedagogy for teachers as separate disciplines which empower the professional skills of prospective workers in education, although some specific subjects have also been developed (Communicology, Communication, Communication Skills, Micropedagogy etc.).

The programmes which support the communication competence of current teachers in Serbia are programmes of the professional development of teachers authorised by the Ministry of Education and relevant institutions. The number of these courses (Table 1) reflects the growth in awareness of education authorities as well as of the providers of teaching programmes themselves about the importance of communication competencies for the realisation of various teacher roles and for the efficiency of the school as a whole.

Table 1. Communication knowledge and skills in in-service teacher education (Serbian example)

Development of communication skills in courses shown in catalogues of in-service educator professional development programmes	**Programmes in catalogues**							
	2002/2003		**2003/2004**		**2006/2007**		**2007/2008**	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
The name of the course indicates it is designed to develop communication skills, competencies	16	12%	24	7%	19	11%	28	8%
The main objectives and topics of the course state that the programme also involves the development of communication skills	17	13%	37	11%	12	7%	50	14%
The objectives and contents of the course specify the development of teaching skills and knowledge which require the development of communication skills as a by-product of the programme, but are not explicitly pointed out	62	48%	205	60%	89	51%	108	30%
Courses in which the development of communication skills is neither explicitly nor implicitly pointed out	44	34%	77	22%	53	31%	174	48%
Total number of courses	**129**		**343**		**173**		**360**	

The systematic observation of the effects of these courses during undergraduate studies and during the in-service period has still not been established as a system, but individual researches have been carried out.

3 Evaluation of communication education

Measuring the effects of communication skills, knowledge, characteristics and attitude development in teachers' education curricula is a complex and multilevel process. The evaluation of communication education is caused by the locus of measurement, general research procedures, goals of investigations, instruments and specific demands etc. We presented some methods of monitoring and evaluating communication competence education, as well as the specific instruments of evaluating communication competence and education.

The evaluation of teachers' development communication skills and knowledge programmes can be based on analytical or holistic issues. The evaluation assesses the process of developing the communication skills curriculum or the products of the curriculum.

3.1 Methods and procedures of evaluating communication education

A general model of the evaluation of teachers' communication education has not developed. The general procedures of evaluation in teaching apply to the evaluation of communication education. Accordingly, both experimental procedures and systematic observation are applicable to the evaluating of teaching communication.

Procedures for evaluating communication education and procedures for evaluating teaching communication have been developed. Some of these procedures have been applied to teachers' communication education.

A critical feature that distinguishes various measures of the evaluation of communication competence education is the locus of measurement. What is the focus of the evaluation: communication knowledge, communication skills, communication abilities, or communication behaviours…?

We can evaluate knowledge of communication education by a norm-referenced measurement and by a criterion-referenced measurement. Smythe et al. (in Vangelisti et al. 1999: 424) compared norm-referenced

to criterion-referenced measurement in communication classes and argued that predetermined criteria are necessary in classroom teaching and evaluation. Rebecca Rubin (in Vangelisti et al. 1999: 426) emphasised the next point: post-communication criticism stimulates creative thinking while interest in the communication process calls attention to student strengths and weaknesses, gives instructions for improvement, and motivates students to do better in the future.

There are three different data sources researchers utilise to assess various aspects of communication competence, especially interpersonal competence (Spitzberg and Cupach, 1989): self-reporting, a partner's judgment of the actor, and third-party observation. None of these perspectives is inherently superior. Indeed, each is subject to limitations. The most appropriate perspective depends upon the researcher's conceptualisation of competence, the researcher's purpose, and the researcher's values regarding the trade-offs of the benefits and drawbacks associated with each technique.

Actor's self-evaluation: Clearly, the most common approach to assessing interpersonal competence (or its components) is the use of self-reporting. The most significant advantage of a self-evaluation is that the individual knows more about him or herself than anyone else does. A person's knowledge of how the self behaves both over time and across contexts is relatively comprehensive.

Although self-evaluation measures can be stable over time and contexts, they are usually global in nature. Because actors are generally focused outwardly on the environment and other social participants, actors are not very adept at reporting about specific microscopic behaviours or details. Thus, a self-report of a feeling (such as satisfaction) or a general behaviour pattern is more likely to be valid than a self-report of specific microscopic behaviours.

Another problem with the self-evaluation of communication competence is that interpersonal competence entails abilities involving accurate social perception (Hazleton and Cupach; Firth, Conger and Dorcey; according to Spitzberg and Cupach, 1989). Spitzberg (1986) compared the correlation between actors' self-ratings of their conversational skills and partner ratings of the actor's skills. When the sample of actors was split according to the self-reported skill levels, there were no significant correlations for the actors who self-reported low skills.

Partner's evaluation of actor: Partner reports about the actor are analogous with participant observation. When studying interpersonal relationships and social interaction, sometimes the partner ('Other' or 'Co-actor') is a better judge of an actor's competence than the actor. Because individuals tend to be outwardly focused, the partner is often a better observer than the actor of the actor's own behaviours.

Another point favouring the use of partner reports is that they are consistent with the interactive nature of interpersonal competencies. While one's self-perception of competence may prove to be interesting in its own right, knowledge about the quality of one's social performance is uniquely tied to the other social actors who constitute the interpersonal network.

Stressing the continuous professional development of teachers implies the general attitude that 'a successful teacher sees him/herself as a student' (Coultas, in: Cole, 2005:131), and they will be able to improve their own teaching if they evaluate it continuously and if they learn from the thriving experience of other teachers. This mutual teacher (horizontal) evaluation can be implemented in everyday teaching and it is a component of the feedback given in some interactive courses and seminars of professional development.

Third–party observation: Third-partner observation of an actor's behaviour is preferred in order to mitigate the subjective biases associated with self and partner reports. Two general strategies are used to obtain behavioural observation: in vivo interaction and semi-naturalistic interaction in the lab.

Observation of in vivo interaction is considered the ideal strategy for behavioural assessment. Ecological validity is maximised by observing behaviour in its natural environment. Unfortunately, such research is rare because of its impracticality.

Semi-naturalistic interactions are frequently used to overcome the limitations of in vivo observation. Numerous variations of this method have been employed. A more structured form of semi-naturalistic interaction is role-playing. Subjects are given a description of scenarios and hypothetical prompts. The subject is expected to respond as they think they normally would if actually involved in such a situation. While a wide range of hypothetical situations can be covered in a brief time, the external validity of the subjects' responses is unclear at best. There are many variations of the role-playing methodology, and the

strengths and limitations of this approach have been extensively documented in the literature (according to Spitzberg & Cupach, 1989).

An evaluation of a third-party can take place via a systematic observation or by the method of behavioural simulation (which implies a presentation of different hypothetical situations to subjects to which they must respond through role-playing or statements about what they would do in such situations). Evaluating by behavioural criteria is considered to be the most appropriate for measuring skills. It is clear that decisions are made according to the specific objectives: whether the course develops an understanding of simple or complex principles; the use of principles for evaluating already set problems or new ones; or whether it is about the application of old principles in certain new situations.

Goldfries and D'Zurilla (in Spitzberg and Cupach, 1989) presented possible approaches to developing and structuring behavioural measures for evaluating the development of communication competencies. There are five steps in their behavioural-analytical model that are implemented in evaluation teaching communication:

1) situation analysis (develop a list of descriptions of communication situations in a domain or set of domains relevant to the evaluation; for example, situations of demonstrating communication skills);
2) response enumeration (obtain a representative range of responses to specific situations identified in step one);
3) response evaluation (assess the relative efficacy of the responses to the situations described in step two);
4) construction of an instrument format (based on the data collected in steps one to three, a complete instrument package can now be constructed; for example, select relevant answers, descriptions of hypothetical situations, coding etc.); and
5) instrument evaluation.

Blatt and Greenberg (2007) applied four evaluation techniques of the 'Teaching and learning communication skills' programme: learners' rating of teaching (students' opinions of the programme and teacher using a standardised inventory); teachers' pre- and post- self-assessment questionnaire (to assess competence); interaction analyses of feedback skills using videotapes and other assessment questionnaires (to assess

the teachers' performance); standardised examinations (to assess communication skills).

Bearing in mind that the courses for developing communication competencies also aim at developing knowledge and increasing awareness about communication, as well as communication skills, many research dilemmas have arisen connected to the different approaches to communication competencies as well as to the inconsistent use of terms (Spitzberg and Cupach, 1989).

The course objectives determine whether skills or knowledge or a combination of the two is the appropriate target for the evaluation of communication education/teaching. For the purposes of this paper, a 'successful outcome is defined as the development of the skills, knowledge and motivation required for independent learning and autonomous professional practice' (Dearnley and Matthew, 2007: 378).

3.2 The instruments of evaluating communication education and teaching communication

Since communication competence is the system of knowledge, skills, abilities, characteristics, attitudes and motivational dispositions that assure successful communication, the same system is involved in the evaluation of programmes which are aimed at their improvement, as is the whole system of the procedure for measuring changes.

Tests of communication knowledge are occasional instruments for evaluating the cognitive domain in teaching communication.

Most of these scales applied in a communication competence assessment are useful in the evaluation of communication competence education. Some of the scales apply to self-reporting measures, some to other reporting measures, but some can apply to both situations.

Spitzberg and Cupach (1989) offer a summary of 81 measures and measuring instruments for evaluating communication competence, especially interpersonal and group communication. Spitzberg and Cupach emphasise measures relevant to domains and skills which are closely related to communication competence or considered to be its components, and are necessary in a teaching career (assertiveness, empathy, motivation).

Rebecca Rubin et al. (2004) systematically select, describe and analyse the applicability of 62 measures for observing and measuring various

aspects of communication competence. Grouping the measures into four categories (measures of instructional communication, measures of interpersonal communication, measures of mass communication and measures of organisational communication); they direct our choice of measures for observing, measuring and evaluating the development of teacher communication competence during and after various courses in education and trainings of communication science and skills.

Based on these two representative accounts, certain aspects of communication competence (Table 2) have been selected and are relevant to professional teaching practice.

Table 2. Review of communication competence measures and measurement instruments

Communication competencies – measures of competence: Spitzberg and Cupach, 1989; Rubin, Palmgreen and Sypher, 2004.	Number of instru-ments	Self-report	Other-report (observa-tion, horizon-tal evalua-tion)
Communication competence (non-specified)	8	2	6
Interpersonal competence	25	16	9
Communication skills	2	0	2
Conversation dimension of communication competence, speech, verbal, written	11	5	6
Communication satisfaction	2	2	0
Communication adaptiveness and effectiveness	2	2	0
Social intelligence	1	1	0
Social skills	5	5	0
Self-esteem, assertiveness and conflict resolution	7	5	2
Social anxiety, and shyness	4	4	0
Motivation communication competence, affective dimension and empathy (there is no special instrument for empathy in these reviews)	4	4	0

Interaction awareness, interaction involvement, listening skills	4	3	1
Behavioural component of communication competence	15	7	8
Group and team communication	3	3	0
Teacher communication	3	3	0
Communication competence in specific groups (organisational, intercultural, family, gender, age), heterosocial skills, marital social skills	23	14	9
Role-play communication competence and situational analyses	10	6	4
Biographical measures	1	1	0
Mass and media communication	13	13	0
N	143	96	47

3.3 Methods and instruments of evaluating communication competent teachers' education

The evaluation of a programme for improving the communication competence of student-prospective teachers and current teachers requires a differentiated approach because learning communication knowledge and skills during pre-service education and in-service education is very specific. In both situations an evaluation experiment is applicable.

During student-prospective teacher education, a horizontal evaluation by a fellow student is a more applicable, restricted situational evaluation. During the education-professional enhancement of current teachers, the systematic observing of behaviour in real teaching situations is more applicable, as are a horizontal evaluation in the classroom involving the use of report scales, student evaluation, self-report scales etc.

Self-reporting is probably best used for global judgments of performance, ratings of confidence in one's own abilities, and research into the role of the self-perception in social interaction. However, self-reporting is not a reliable procedure to measure the development of communication competence domains and components in training procedures (especially in the short term). Thus, self-reporting is limited

to an evaluation of the teachers' communication competence, pre-service and in-service training and education.

Other report measures are suitable for monitoring the effects of teaching communication in teachers' education. Partner reports are especially appropriate for context-specific or relationship-specific evaluations of behaviour. Partner reports are also useful in situations where those interacting are acquainted. For example, students, as teachers' social partners, can assess a change in a teacher's behaviour after the training according to special assessment scales, changes in one's own social interaction in the class, changes in course motivation etc. When students report better communication in the class after the teacher's training, it is one indicator of the effects of the communication competence education.

Behavioural observation may be most appropriate when the focus is on several microscopic behaviours, when complex *a priori* criteria are being used to evaluate performance or when the social appropriateness of behaviour is the exclusive concern of the researcher.

Based on a consideration of the applicability of these instruments in evaluating teachers' communication competence education, comparative studies and our researches and empirical analyses, we selected the following instruments to monitor and measure changes in teachers' communication competence development (students-teachers in pre-service CE and active teachers in in-service CE):

- Self-report instruments: Communicator Style Measure – teacher's (Norton, in Rubin et al. 2004: 134); Communication Anxiety Inventory (Booth-Butterfiels and Gould, in. Rubin et al. 2004: 109-113); Index of interpersonal reactivity (Davis); Interaction Involvement Scale (Cegala et al. 1982); Interpersonal Communication Motives Scale (Rubin, Perse and Barbato, in Rubin et al. 2004: 211-216); Interpersonal Communication Satisfaction Inventory (Hecht, in: Rubin et al. 2004: 217-222); Rahim Organisation Conflict Inventory (Rahim, 2001; Pokrajac and Kardum, according to Bjekic and Zlatic, 2006); Team Attitude Inventory;
- Other report instruments by supervisors, social partners, colleagues, peer-evaluators, pupils/students: Verbal Immediacy Behaviours Scale (Mehrabian, in: Rubin et al. 2004: 393), Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviours Instrument (Richmond, Gorham and McCroskey, 1987, in: Rubin et al. 2004: 238-241),

General assessment scale of the teacher's communication (Zlatic and Bjekic, 2004); Communicative Competence Scale (Wiemann, 1977, in: Rubin et al. 2004: 125-129);

- Indirect measures of changing communication in the classroom only for active teachers: Students/pupils' course motivation scale (Brkovic et al. 1997), Student Motivation Scale (Beatty and Payne, in: Rubin et al. 2004: 343-346); Students/pupils' satisfaction of social interaction, Students/pupils' evaluation of the teaching process and teachers; the students/pupils results in instruction etc.

Investigations of the communication competence in the educational context continue at all levels of the education system. The authors of the paper realised some investigations with student-teachers and active teachers and applied some of the mentioned instruments (Bjekic, 2000: Bjekic et al. 2007; Bjekic and Zlatic 2006a, 2006b; Bjekic, Zlatic and Bojovic 2007; Zlatic and Bjekic, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007; Zlatic et al. 2006). Some of these investigations evaluated the course of communication education:

- Effects of developing communication in teaching activities (effects of professional socialisation) are investigated by comparing engineer-teachers in teaching at secondary school (high level) with engineers out of the teaching process but with the same education (Bjekic and Zlatic 2006a). Both demonstrate similar communication characteristics (interaction involvement, conflict resolution style, team communication and attitudes), and very rarely are there differences.
- The investigation of the relationship between the students' interaction involvement and effectiveness of the acquisition of the communicology course contents (Zlatic &Bjekic, 2006) confirmed a positive correlation between the students' effectiveness and level of interaction involvement, attentiveness and perceptiveness; however, there is no correlation between the students' effectiveness and responsiveness; there are no differences regarding interaction involvement between the student-prospective teachers and prospective engineers.

4 Conclusion

It is necessary to teach teachers' communication skills at both the initial education level for teaching work, and continually in the professional domain. Teachers should develop appropriate social skills, apply a wide repertoire of communication strategies, and learn and understand the causes and consequences of their communication actions. A diagnosis of their communication knowledge, skills and attitudes is the first step in the systematic modelling of communication curricula and training according to their educational needs and communication competence improvement. At the same tame, it represents an evaluation measurement of the curricula and training activities. However, measuring the effects of communication skills, knowledge and attitude development in teachers' education curricula remains a complex and multilevel process.

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Enhancing the Quality of Higher Education Learning and Teaching – A Case Study from the South East European University

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Introduction

'*High quality education and training are regarded as being indispensable in establishing a Europe of knowledge; in transforming European societies into dynamic learning societies; and in assisting the process of European integration for economic prosperity and social cohesion*' (Buchberger, F., Campos, B. P., Kallos, D., Stephenson, J., 2000, p. 2). High quality teachers are seen as an essential component of these educational priorities and the South East European University ('SEEU') provides an example of how a higher education institution has sought to enhance critical thinking, self-reflection and evaluation as an institution both within Teacher Education and across every faculty and department with a specific focus on the quality of learning and teaching, staff teaching performance and training and development. This focus is endorsed by the Eurydice education network on education in Europe: '*Concern for Quality Assurance in Teacher Education is closely linked to the broader context of the development of Higher Education and the follow up to the Bologna Process*' (Eurydice, 2006, p. 3).

Background

The challenge of developing such an evaluative culture was one of many the university faced and was not given initial priority in the circumstances of the university's opening. The first 900 students were enrolled in the South East European University ('SEEU') in October 2001. Establishment of the university was only made possible by an amendment to the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Macedonia which allowed instruction in the Albanian language in

higher education for privately funded universities. Its foundation was initiated in the spring of 2000 by the then OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoel. This so-called 'private' higher education institution was to operate in the public interest, for academic and social purposes rather than economic ones, and help to overcome the limited opportunities for access to higher education for native speakers of Albanian. Since its establishment, it consisted of five socio-economic and contemporary science disciplines: Business Administration, Communication Sciences and Technologies, Law, Pedagogical and Methodology Training and Public Administration.

The government supported this initiative and granted the site for the SEEU campus but its creation still came about in very turbulent times. It was a period of armed conflict in the country and the focus of these activities was in Tetovo, the area where the university is based. The Council of Europe's Report on 'Higher Education in South Eastern Europe' stressed the need for 'a satisfactory solution to the issue of higher education provision in the two major languages of the country' The main aims in this period were security, attracting and retaining students whose education had been disrupted, appointing staff with relevant academic and language skills and qualifications and the production of appropriate curricula and site development.

The country was also passing through a transition period in all spheres of existence with great difficulty**.** Significantly, the student body was coming from unreformed schools with teacher-centred instruction in which the memorising of facts was prioritised and with teachers being the only and ultimate source of knowledge and authority. Critical thinking skills were neither promoted nor valued. The teachers had the same educational background. They were products of the same education system and were used to practicing it in the same traditional way. Teacher Education itself was still shaped by an 'imbalance between the vocational-scientific and professional-pedagogic components' which led to 'the future teacher studying the scientific content but not sufficiently preparing for its modeling and application in the teaching process (they teach physics, but are not professional in helping students cope with the subject of physics)' (Delceva Dizdarvevic, J., Adamceska Damovska, S., 2007, p. 343). Moreover, the Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Macedonia, mirrored by university policies, focused on the value of acquiring qualifications in terms of career and reward rather

than on a wider range of professional skills, including the ability to reflect critically and deliver competently. Also taking into consideration the perception that political and family affiliation were crucial in acquiring and keeping any position, the atmosphere was not favourable for developing an evaluative ethos.

Therefore in both the specific and wider contexts the SEEU was seen as 'a great experiment not only in resolving an old Balkan quarrel but also introducing new ideas and methods of higher education' (Farrington, D., 2005, p. 13).

Initial developments and external influences

Despite the challenging social, economic and educational environment, the university sought to model itself on internationally established good practice and aspired to initiate, develop and lead educational thinking within the Republic of Macedonia and the region. It has worked towards this via both internal and external means. For example, the first teaching offered by the university was in the English language. This was chosen purposefully in order to foster the university's mission regarding language, equality and integration and to promote new models of learning and teaching and a change to a more interactive teaching/learning approach. This work was supervised by Indiana University ('IU'), which has been a partner of the SEEU from the very beginning. Indiana University also organised and sponsored professional development opportunities for SEEU teaching staff, offered on-site seminars led by their professionals and facilitated visits to the IU campus and student exchanges. This use of external, collaborative partners exposed the SEEU to different approaches and strategies and helped create an environment in which new ideas and concepts were considered and accepted.

The Department for Pedagogical and Methodological Training was also part of this from the outset and has sought to put into practice 'expert training whose goal is to build the professional competency of teachers', including the 'nurturing of innovative spirit and creation' and having 'a positive direction leading towards educational changes' in which 'human potential involves a process which continuously gains in quality' (Delceva Dizdarvevic, J., Adamceska Damovska, S., 2007, p.

343). The Department prepares language teachers for primary and secondary schools. The curricula for these studies were created in co-operation and consultation with experts from Indiana University to be in line with the latest developments in teacher education. Methodology courses, for example, first define the most important pedagogical areas in theoretical terms and then, what is crucial, apply these theories in practice. For example, students and teachers create forms used for analysis and evaluation when they observe language teachers in the Language Centre. The purpose of the forms is to develop in these future teachers an awareness of the need for critical reflection about someone else's teaching, and a positive commitment to self-monitoring and self-evaluation of their own teaching at a later stage. Then, these students prepare one language class for the students at the Language Centre, with the teacher being there to comment on their teaching. The final stage is teaching a real language class in a local secondary school. In this way, future teachers not only learn by seeing how other teachers do their job but also get used to the constant monitoring of quality as part of self and institutional improvement. It is a powerful partnership between the trainee and an experienced teacher based on collaboration and trust.

This modelling of an evaluative culture with future teachers is further developed through peer observation in the master's programme in English Language Teaching. At this stage, the students, some of whom are already teachers, observe their peers using the same procedure of writing comments and reflecting critically on their own teaching by making observations of somebody else's practice.

The university also offers a successful external training programme for School Directors. The Certificate Programme for Professional Leadership of School Directors offers a specific module on teaching observation good practice. With this, the aim is to get school directors acquainted with the benefits of the observation process and the teaching strategies they need to observe and promote. The module supports their own plus their staff's development in critical thinking and quality management. In this way they can implement an active observation process in the schools they manage and contribute further to creating a culture of teacher evaluation.

However, 'initial teacher education can only provide a basis for the development of a teacher's competencies, which may be further encouraged in the framework of in-service teacher education'; 'neither initial nor in-service teacher education is solely responsible for creating 'good' teachers'. Quality control is also seen as crucial although such measures are 'relatively new, so their actual effectiveness and impact in maintaining and improving the quality of provision still remains unclear' *Eurydice (2006, p. 70)*. The South East European University views the development of such quality assurance and management systems as a key strategy.

An institutional approach

So, how does an institution such as the SEEU continue this development of evaluative cultures in both its teacher education programmes and with its teaching staff in general? The answer lies in the approach taken above, that is, in a commitment to training both teaching staff and managers and in developing an integrated institutional approach. The analysis and promotion of evaluative education theories, along with the teaching of how to implement these in practice within the teacher education field, is crucial, yet it is not enough, especially in a situation where theories are often described and analysed but not demonstrated or activated in practice, or where the implementation and support of established procedures is objectively lacking. Critically, for the effective renewal of an evaluative culture reflective practice must be developed and modelled across the whole organisation; owned actively by the staff, students and external stakeholders not just in one department like Teacher Training but also in every other department, faculty and section. Teachers cannot develop a reflective approach in isolation. Nor can they teach and support their students effectively using the new curriculum focus on learning outcomes which include skills, attitudes and application as well as knowledge and understanding without modelling such skills and attitudes themselves. All stakeholders are involved. An institution-wide approach is also consistent with the European-wide Bologna declaration and the SEEU has benefited from placing these guidelines at the centre of its function and practice. This has helped create an institution which has equality, language diversity, high quality and evaluative practice as part of its central mission.

Strategic approaches

Thus, the South East European University has committed itself to a total quality culture with evaluation and self-improvement at its heart. This is firstly a matter of strategic direction from the Rectorate. Senior managers are developing an evaluative leadership and management style. They have specifically considered advice from the University's external Quality Champion, whose twice annual visits form key points in the annual review cycle. This Quality Champion elicits information from all levels of staff both formally and informally, meets with specific university bodies and the Student Union, and reports on the quality of academic, administrative and support systems. The report is published and used to identify improvements, and to initiate developments at faculty, departmental and university level. Just recently, the university formalised its forward planning process with the introduction of Action Plans for all faculties and departments. These were produced by the Deans and Heads of Departments, validated by the relevant Senior Manager, and are being monitored for successful implementation. Crucially, staff teams were asked to contribute to their production and implementation and have proved useful in highlighting key achievements, areas for improvement and development and action planning. The plans are evidence-based and focus on what can be achieved realistically within the academic year. The Department for Pedagogical and Methodological Training is currently implementing its own plan and the university's Quality Assurance and Management Commission has itself presented an overall planning document to the Board. This has proved beneficial in focusing the university's priorities for the year. In October 2007, the SEEU was also successfully validated according to the international ISO 9000 standards which have been an effective mechanism for strengthening our evaluative procedures, particularly in administrative areas. One requirement is a procedure for effective review and change management. Thus, developments have been actively led by senior management, evaluation has been embedded in an annual review and planning cycle, and the processes devised have sought to involve all levels of staff for use across both academic and administrative faculties and departments to create an institution-wide culture of self-improvement.

Performance management processes have also been used in order to shift the ethos of the university, keeping in mind the fact that 'there is a

risk of bureaucratic overregulation' (*Eurydice, 2006, p. 4)*. Practice is still primarily shaped and influenced by the requirements of the Higher Education Law and the statutes of the university which mirror this legal framework. However, developments within and beyond the legal framework are moving the university forward. An example of this is the creation and review of job descriptions for academic staff. The university used external facilitators in order to carry out on-the-ground job reviews of key positions, analysed what they and the staff themselves said about their work, and produced job descriptions which formalised job roles, rankings, workload and career progression. For teaching staff, they include specifics regarding effective teaching, skill in communication with and support for students and the commitment to individual and institutional review and development. This work is currently being completed for all levels of work (both academic and administrative) and will be vital in providing structured evaluative management. The university is also currently revamping its appraisal forms and process in order to create a more active, evaluative process. Further, it recently reviewed and changed its bonus scheme which was previously given on a 'flat' basis. This revised process encouraged greater staff involvement against specified criteria. The review of this has been mixed and further work may need to be done, but it is seen as another step towards better staff motivation and quality management. The value of the consultative nature of developing such quality processes and the growing confidence in review, evaluation and development is central to them being accepted and used positively.

Professional development and training has grown in importance. There has always been support and encouragement for staff to complete academic qualifications along with a focus on offering seminars, conferences, workshops and external and/or international courses in order to support high quality curriculum development, review and accreditation. However, in March 2005 the university established the Instructional Support Centre (ISC) under the umbrella of the USAID-financed Higher Education Linkage Project between Indiana University (IU) and the SEEU. The main goal of setting up the ISC was to create an opportunity for the additional professional development of teachers working at the SEEU by providing training sessions in three specific areas: English language, current teaching methodology and the incorporation of technology in teaching, IT skills (MS Excel, MS Power Point, MS Access, etc) and the usage of ANGEL software. ANGEL is

online course management software (CMT) introducing an online environment for learning and teaching. The goal was for the SEEU instructors to be able to: post an online syllabus, create and edit a course calendar, upload files for student use or download student assignments from previously created drop boxes, develop online quizzes and surveys, communicate with students through ANGEL, create lessons by combining lesson elements in a logical order, track student progress, create an on-line grade book, create discussion forums, and set a time limit for assignment submission. Although ANGEL is still a fairly new tool at the SEEU, the statistics indicate great success in terms of user numbers over a relatively short period of time (71.63% of full-time teachers and 35.04% of part-time teachers) (Zlatkovska, E., 2007). This was perceived by teachers as a useful tool for sharing data but also as mechanism for changing the approach to learning and communication with students. For the Department of Pedagogical and Methodological Training, the ISC has organised video links with experts from Indiana University on current issues in teacher training. These and other training initiatives are linked closely to the observation process described below.

Teaching Observation – the pilot

The quality of teaching and learning in all faculties of the university is evaluated against student achievements and a yearly student evaluation and these indicators are taken into consideration for the purposes of staff performance management, in particular with regard to contractual issues. Some informal observation of learning and teaching took place, in particular for staff new to teaching or where issues had been identified. These tended to focus on negative aspects. The university wished to move to a more positive, developmental approach for all teaching staff in line with recommendations for 'future teachers' in initial teacher training in Macedonia, which was to promote the development of 'their skills to share the fundamental knowledge with their students within the framework of their understanding and abilities' (Delceva Dizdarvevic, J., Adamceska Damovska, S., 2007, p. 343). Thus, the aims and outcomes of how the university is developing an evaluative culture for the education of teachers in both its Teacher Education Department and across the institution is clearly reflected in the creation, implementation and first review of its procedure for the Observation of Learning and Teaching established during the 2006-7

academic year. In line with the Bologna quality assurance guidelines which require that 'institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so' (*European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education,* 2005), the university's Quality Champion recommendations (Bource, M., 2007), its own internal plans and Implementation Report, the university decided to focus on enhancing the quality of the students' learning experience in lectures and practical workshops. This included the delivery of teaching to teacher training programmes.

Academic and administrative leaders were very clear that the rationale should:

- support the university's strategic aim of continuous improvement and the development of learning and teaching;
- provide evidence of quality assurance at the faculty and university level;
- ensure that the students' learning experience is of the highest quality across each faculty;
- acknowledge excellent practice and facilitate the sharing of good practices across each faculty and the university;
- support continuous, individual staff development;
- inform other relevant processes, specifically, the annual self-evaluation process and the allocation of staff bonuses; and
- ensure that learning and teaching is inclusive and addresses the university's commitment to the equality of opportunity.

This was a scheme which was to be supportive and positive, in line with the university's mission, led and promoted by senior managers and implemented objectively in order to train and develop the whole range of teaching staff from assistants to professors, both full- and part-time, in every learning setting and across all faculties and centres. It aimed to make a difference to the quality of learning and teaching and to not merely be a management tool. This again mirrored the approach recommended for teacher training in Macedonia where the way that evaluation results were used was seen as crucial for the 'acceptance of quality control within a system' and to avoid the danger that 'evaluation reports may also be produced only "for the sake of producing them", in order to respond to an administrative demand without having any real

implications for the providers. They may not be given back to those whose work was evaluated. In this context, the way in which these results are expressed also seems quite important' (Eurydice, 2006, p. 69).

The findings of the research paper 'Teaching Observations: A Meeting of Minds?' (Hatzipanagos, S., Lygo-Baker, S., 2006) proved useful, specifically by detailing the advantages and disadvantages of peer observation schemes and their impact on staff thinking and performance. This useful journal paper outlines the current research literature, details the perceived positive and negative outcomes, compares the observers' views with the views of those being observed and draws conclusions about the most positive aspects of such schemes – the formative and developmental aspects with trust being the most important underpinning factor. The paper also offers different models of implementation and concludes that 'observations within an educational developer observation framework (that is, with external, objective observation) do provide a time to consider knowledge and deepen understanding'. 'All recognized the importance of constructive and supportive feedback. The formative nature of such feedback determined the attributes of the relationship between observer and observee being non-intimidating and supportive and will potentially contribute to development and improvement' (Hatzipanagos, S., Lygo-Baker, S., 2006, p. 103). The positive points identified were relayed to observers and the observed during training and briefing meetings and contributed towards formulation of the scheme at the SEEU. This use of research within a research-based institution has supported the development of critical thinking and aided acceptance of the observation process.

The scheme was developed in a similar thorough and consultative manner to meet the current situation, needs and aspirations of the university and its stakeholders. Schemes and approaches from other higher education institutions and from other sectors were considered. There was an initial discussion amongst the Rectorate and Faculty Deans and Pro-Deans about whether to use 'peer' or colleague observers, observation by senior faculty members, or members of other faculties, or external observers. There was debate on how to report and standardise observer judgments and whether to use a grading system or provide feedback through the use of specific language. There was further discussion about the link with performance management, contracts of employment, the university's bonus scheme, as well as the right balance

of teaching, research and administration in the job descriptions. There was, very importantly, a lively debate about what would work at the university and whether the staff would accept, respect and use the observation process positively. There were very specific concerns:

- would the scheme be objective and free of personal, political and other influences?
- would it be accepted, especially by established professors who had seen their qualifications and experience as being synonymous with teaching skill and felt that such a scheme was inappropriate for them?
- would staff view observation only from a negative point of view and as unwarranted criticism which might impact on their job security or reputation?
- would observers have senior management backing and would they have the skills to carry out the observations with accuracy and sensitivity?
- would it just be a paper exercise to be used by 'management' as a measuring tool but without any impact on actual teaching?
- would it be logistically feasible given the number of staff involved and would the observers receive a 'remit' to make the scheme workable within their existing responsibilities?
- would the reports be linked to training opportunities?
- would the scheme be appropriate to the established ways of working within a post-communist country?

If nothing else, the initiation of the pilot scheme had generated a significant level of institutional reflection even without a written scheme in place, and all these points were noted in a review report and considered when producing the draft Procedure and Forms which were circulated to the Rectorate, Faculty Deans and Pro-Deans and the university's staff development unit, the Instructional Support Centre, for consideration and refinement in May 2007 in Albanian, Macedonian and English. The scheme provided for annual, supported observation, an optional unannounced observation; all observations co-observed; pre- and post-observation meetings, a written report supported by guidance about which language to use; a training analysis; an opportunity for observee input; and sections detailing how to deal with possible issues, observer conduct and appeals. It was agreed by all stakeholders in early June 2007 (Appendix 1).

In addition, and something regarded as crucial by both observers and observees, staff were provided with notes on the criteria for excellence which the observers might expect to see. These were developed in grid and note form, with reference to a number of published good practice lists. They were to be used during the pre-observation meeting to support the discussion of the lesson plan, for observers to refer to during the observation and when writing the feedback report, and again for shared use in the feedback discussion.

The templates recommended for standard use were:

- Teaching Observation – the Characteristics of Excellence (note and grid form)
- Teaching Observation Confirmation Request (an invitation form for staff)
- Lesson Plan Form (for an observed lesson only)
- Teaching Observation Feedback Form
- Co-observation and Support Feedback Form
- Use of Language in Providing Teaching Observation Feedback (guidance notes which support thoughtful, accurate and standardised feedback)

The draft Procedure and Forms were circulated to all teaching staff via faculty managers and email, and briefing and consultation meetings were offered to each of the five faculties with a focus on full-time staff. Comments were again noted and considered.

In early June, 2007, faculty observers and co-observers, including members of the Rectorate, received training. In all, 18 members of staff were trained in the scheme's context and purpose, the research base, the procedure and forms and how to produce effective feedback reports. The training sessions employed active learning techniques and evaluative opportunities to model good practice.

The pilot project then began in earnest. Within a two-week period at the end of May and beginning of June 2007, 11 observations took place. The draft SEEU procedure and paperwork were used and every observation was co-observed. The co-observer commented on both the lecturer's performance and the objectivity of the process. The observees included

professors, assistants and one international staff member and included both new and experienced teachers. Feedback was given to the person being observed within the prescribed five-day time limit, recognising good practice and identifying areas for development and/or training. Those being observed were invited to actively participate in the feedback and note their comments on the Feedback Form. Copies of each report were provided to the observee, observer, Faculty and Rectorate for overall quality assurance. Copies were also seen by the Instructional Support Centre and formed a basis for identifying professional development needs. This resulted in the circulation of a Needs Analysis Training Menu and in the development of training sessions in 2007-8.

At the end of the pilot, both the observers and observees were asked to evaluate the procedure and a report was published in three languages. Comments included:

- An endorsement of the procedure so that its use for 2007-8, with some minor adjustments, could be confirmed.
- Confirmation that the forms were easy to use and facilitated useful, evaluative feedback.
- Full acknowledgement that the pilot process was operated objectively.
- A very high level of satisfaction with the observer training, with useful evaluative comments.
- 9 out of 11 observees made comments on their Feedback Forms that indicated a willingness to participate in the feedback process. Most comments by those who were observed endorsed the usefulness of the process and what individuals had learned, but some staff used the opportunity to advocate their point of view or disagree.
- Positive and useful evaluation responses by observers and observees. Specifically, they stated that the paperwork and criteria for excellence supported the observer while one co-observer felt that the pilot process had helped in identifying and dealing with potential problems. Those being observed stated that they felt the process had been supportive and helpful for acknowledging their good practice, boosting confidence and identifying areas for development. One or two pointed out that they had felt nervous and would almost have preferred not to

know that anyone was coming. All observers and observees felt that the pre-observation, observation and post-observation elements were all useful, but the observees said that the post-observation feedback was the most valuable part. The observers also stated they had gained valuable insights during the process. The observers felt that continued central support was needed in order to operate the process effectively in the next year. Mechanisms for sharing good practice and identifying staff training needs should be developed in the faculties and across the university. Further consideration also needs to be given to the use of languages in the pre-observation and post-observation process to ensure that detailed feedback is received which is accurate and mutually understood.

- Useful critical comments resulted in adaptations to the scheme for 2007-8 which also raised awareness of possible future issues, for example, with the standardisation of judgements and the workloads of observers.

Operation in 2007-8

Since the start of the 2007-2008 academic year the observation procedure has operated fully for both full- and part-time academic staff (293 in total, 149 full-time and 144 part-time teaching staff). The university has sought to implement the scheme positively, with careful attention to detail and staff and faculty requirements. Thus, all staff were re-notified in September about the process and each faculty was again offered the opportunity to discuss the process with lead people and staff teams. The names of all faculty observers were confirmed with the Rectorate and a small number of new observers were trained using the same materials and active follow-up. To ensure that staff knew the scheme was fair and equal, a schedule was drawn up and circulated which identified an observation date for each member of staff in the first semester and provided notification to those staff who would be observed in the second semester. Careful consideration was given to the co-observation schedule to ensure that the 'external' observers worked equally between faculties, faculty observers and levels of observed staff. Individual issues concerning sensitivity to rank and expertise were resolved with the aim of maximising the usefulness of the process.

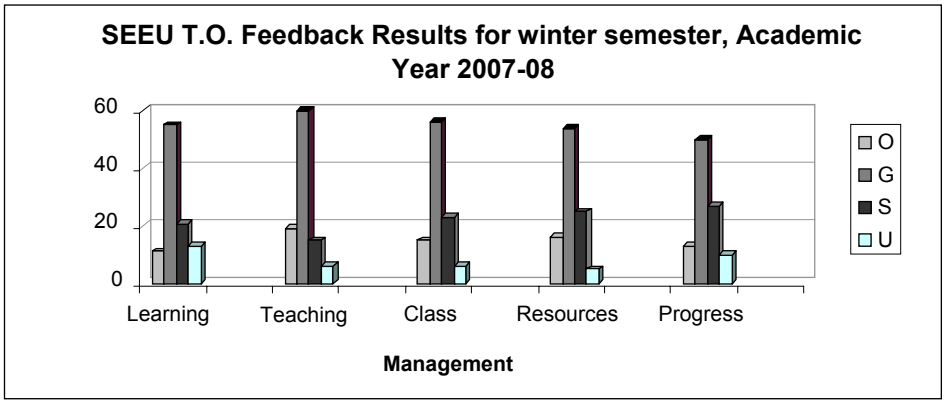
In all, 100 feedback records were received from mid-October until the end of December 2007, including Professors, Assistants, two Deans out of five and one Pro-Rector (34% of the staff total). These were spread across every faculty, including 26 from the Department of Pedagogical and Methodological Training. Each person was given the opportunity to talk about their lesson plan in advance of the lesson, along with the criteria for excellence and to discuss their syllabus, roster and other records and therefore to feel well-supported and prepared. A small number of observations was delayed or postponed because the staff were not prepared or due to the sickness or unavailability of observers. Feedback meetings (sometimes with the main observer and sometimes accompanied by the co-observer) took place in most cases. Written reports using carefully advised language were provided to the observees and 31 lecturers took the opportunity to add their own comments about the process and with regard to their feedback. Copies of these reports were given to the observee, observer, a copy was lodged in a quality folder in each faculty while copies were also logged centrally for quality assurance and monitoring purposes. There has been one re-observation because the first one was less than satisfactory and this has resulted in improved observed performance. Two other re-observations are planned for the first semester. There have been three disputed observation reports which were followed up with central support. Summary information concerning the observations has been logged including the number of observations carried out by each observer (Table I). A first semester review has been produced which provides a teaching observation profile (Chart I). An observee questionnaire was also circulated and the responses analysed.

Table I. Completion of Observations by Observers from October to December 2007

Name of Observer	**No. of observations (from Quality Assurance and Management Office records to 14.01.08)**
Observer A	8
Observer B	6
Observer C	10
Observer D	1

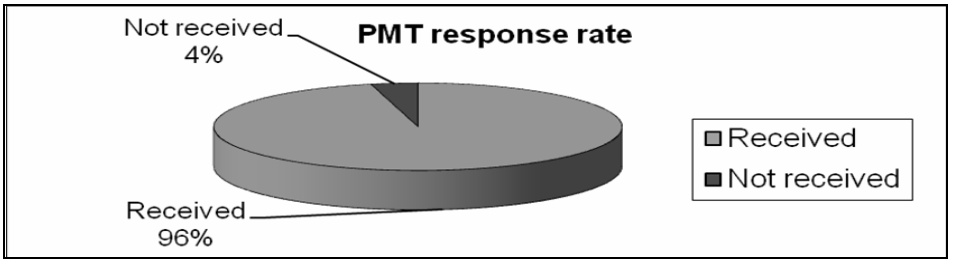
Observer E	1
Observer F	4
Observer G	5
Observer H	10
Observer I	7
Observer J	4
Observer K	2
Observer L	3
Observer M	6
Observer N	7
Observer O	10
Observer P	5
Observer Q	6
Observer R	3
Observer S	2 (plus 18 co-obs)
Total	**100**

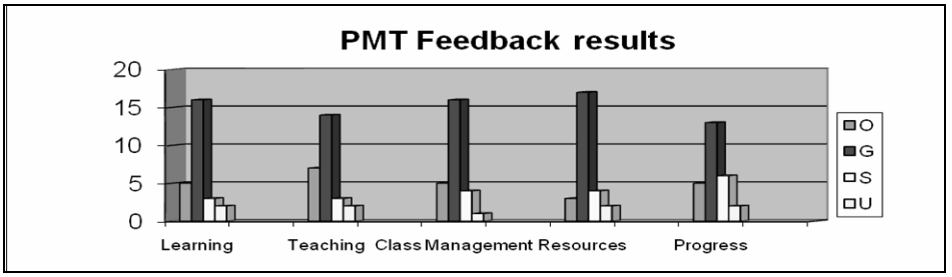
Chart I. Teaching Observation Profile October – December 2007



Each faculty was presented with a breakdown of their own observation profile. Below is an example from the Pedagogical and Methodological Training Faculty (Chart II).

Chart II. Example of a Faculty Observation Profile from Faculty of Pedagogical and Methodological Training





The review indicated the following**:**

- Compliance with the requirements and the spirit of the procedure has been good but there are a number of issues about the operation of the process that need to be addressed through discussion and further training and support for observers. These issues partly involve availability and workload and may be partly accounted for by the current level of commitment within a culture that believes processes can be circumvented or completed 'on paper' without maximising their value and usefulness.
- The teaching observation profile indicates a small number of outstanding lessons and a small number of unsatisfactory sessions with the majority of observations being satisfactory or good or a mixture. This indicates a solid base of competency but

that there is plenty of room for further reflection, training and development.

- With regard to the lecturer comments, 41 members of staff out of 100 observed wrote something on their feedback form. 10 commented on the process, mostly positively. 18 noted how they might improve as a result of the process which demonstrated that this had contributed to active self-evaluation. 15 made self-justifying comments which implied that they did not feel they had learned anything which would improve their teaching skills.
- Key areas for training were identified including lesson planning with specific objectives and student activities, questioning techniques, management of large size lectures to maximise concentration and participation, and the quality use of resources.

Questionnaires about the procedure were received from six members of staff. This low response rate may indicate a lack of interest or willingness to complete the form but it was issued at the end of the semester and further forms may still be received. Staff were asked to comment in one of three languages on the process, on the relative value of the main parts of the procedure, how it had helped their practice, whether it was supportive, whether the training was identified , whether they would recommend it to other colleagues and other comments. All expressed positive support for the process and 4 out of 6 indicated that it had helped with their practice, although there was a focus on improving weaknesses rather than recognising good practice. All felt the process had been supportive and would recommend it to their colleagues. Critical comments included points concerning the efficiency of the system, the experience and abilities of the observers and the quality of the pre- and post-observation advice.

What is also very important is the contribution the procedure has made to the quality of learning and teaching and its effectiveness in helping to shift the university's culture and ethos. Whilst it has been in operation for only a short time, the following benefits may be identified:

- the successful introduction of a formal, evaluative procedure which supports both individual critical thinking and institutional quality assurance;

- a greater focus on what makes excellent teaching in a higher education institution which can be shared across all faculties, including teacher training;
- lively debate amongst academic staff, for example, about what is possible in a large size lecture as opposed to a small, practical group;
- useful support for the development of management skills in being able to observe, evaluate and accurately describe teaching practice, and more actively manage staff performance;
- identification of good practice seen and a greater opportunity to share and discuss teaching strategies, for example, from the follow-up faculty training workshops and summary guidance notes circulated;
- additional evidenced follow-up where teaching was seen as unsatisfactory;
- greater awareness of issues still to be tackled, for example, reviewing some syllabi, certain student results;
- increased individual opportunity for self-reflection in a supportive, non-intimidating environment;
- feedback meetings which have acted as training sessions for staff; and the identification of other general training needs, for example, the use of questioning techniques;
- a positive response from students to the scheme, including a request for any reports to be made available to the Student Union Executive; and
- support for other processes, for example, appraisal, staff bonus scheme, the development of job descriptions for academic staff.

Conclusions – Evaluation and the lessons learned

The South East European University has had to face serious challenges, deal with rapid development within a transitional education system and lead and motivate its staff to aspire to the highest quality within and beyond the current culture and educational mentality. It has made the enhancement of the quality of its provision and its staff a central part of its strategy and recognised that using evaluative mechanisms to create a real learning community is the key to success. It believes that an evaluative approach must be integrated into the whole institution and that all procedures and stakeholders must be actively involved. The link between quality and the continued success of the institution is

recognised as is the importance of the ethos of the university with its commitment to inspiring its staff and students with the motivation to learn and the desire for lifelong self-development.

The introduction and initial implementation of the Annual Observation of the Learning and Teaching Process has demonstrated that a carefully constructed and thoughtfully implemented procedure can be an agent for change towards a more evaluative culture. The aim was to combine an effective tool for quality management with a system which would improve teaching practice within a positive and supportive environment. In order to do this successfully, the procedure should involve some key characteristics:

- The purpose and use of any procedure must be clear and explicitly agreed and communicated to all participants, for example, whether it is for internal or external measurement, for institutional or personal development, and how it is related to performance management processes.
- In a research-oriented institution, it is useful to consider relevant research and to analyse other procedures and systems but then adopt a model which is tailored to institutional and staff needs.
- It is imperative that evaluation must be evidence-based, specific, measurable and achievable and that staff understand the criteria against which they will be measured.
- Effective consultation, communication and review involving all participants maximises effectiveness.
- Teaching staff should be encouraged to evaluate their teaching in a reflective way and must be willing to discuss their teaching and accept constructive advice for the process to work. This is part of a process of developing both staff and managers' skills in analysis and evaluation.
- Staff of the Pedagogical and Methodological Faculty need to 'model' the good practice and strategies they teach in theory and be able to share the benefits of their expertise across the institution.
- Approaches to teaching must mirror the learning outcomes in the new curricula delivered to students in terms of skills, application and attitudes as well as knowledge.
- Evaluation is a skill homed by gaining a qualification, but not necessarily sufficiently developed as part of that qualification.

New skills and techniques for teaching need to be learned and should be continually developed and reviewed.

The South East European University is an individual example of how an institution can progress towards renewing evaluative cultures so that what we do is of the highest quality and how we try to inspire the teachers we train, the lecturers in every faculty and the students we teach.

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Appendix 1

Annual observation of the learning and teaching process

1. Background

One of the most significant factors for ensuring that we are continuously improving and developing what we are providing to students is the quality of our teaching. There is a great deal of good teaching and learning within the university. We need to make sure that we are sharing good practice and supporting staff in the continuous development of skills and methodology.

2. Purpose

The focus of the observation process is:

- to support the university's strategic aim of continuous improvement and development of learning and teaching
- to provide evidence of quality assurance at faculty and university level
- to ensure that the students' learning experience is of the highest quality across each faculty
- to acknowledge excellent practice and facilitate the sharing of good practice across each faculty and the university
- to support continuous, individual staff development
- to inform other relevant processes, specifically the annual self-evaluation process and the allocation of staff bonuses
- to ensure that learning and teaching is inclusive and addresses the university's commitment to the equality of opportunity

3. What should be observed?

As far as possible, a range of all activities which constitute 'teaching' should be observed. This could be lectures, small group lessons,

practical classes and classes in specialist rooms. The observer and observee will agree on the most appropriate session when they confirm the observation dates.

4. Frequency of Observation

- All staff will be observed once per year as part of the formal, supported process. Each faculty may consider other ways of supporting learning and teaching such as colleague observation, shared workshop sessions, good practice guidelines, training.
- Staff who are newly engaged to teach at the university will have two supported observations, using the university scheme and pro formas.
- Observers should also carry out an additional unannounced observation for each member of staff during the academic year in order to monitor teaching delivery or follow-up on issues discussed during the formal, supported observation.

5. Who will the observations do?

- The Deans and the Pro-Dean for Academic Issues in each faculty, with Deans co-ordinating the process. In order to ensure the process is carried out effectively, each faculty must nominate the observers annually and this will be agreed by the Pro-Rector for Academic Issues. This annual process may include alternative or other nominations for observers, as appropriate.
- The Pro-Rector for Academic Issues or Rectorate nominees.
- Staff in the Instructional Support Centre with pedagogical expertise will co-observe in order to support the process and to collaborate with the faculties in producing a coherent staff development plan and for disseminating good teaching practice.

NOTE: All staff will undergo training prior to carrying out the observations or being observed

6. Support and monitoring process

Where possible, it is recommended that two people carry out each observation and

- all new observers will be supported by co-observation in the first year
- a percentage of observers will be supported by co-observation annually
- all re-observations will be supported by co-observation

7. Can a lecturer object to an observer?

It is anticipated that such situations will only happen in exceptional circumstances.

However, for the process to be effective there needs to be some trust and credibility between the observer and the observee. For this reason, if a lecturer objects to a particular observer, they should put these concerns in writing and discuss them with their Dean so that the faculty can address the issue. If no satisfactory outcome is reached, then the matter should be referred to the Pro-Rector for Academic Issues, who may be asked to carry out the observation. A member of staff from the Instructional Support Centre or from outside the faculty may also be asked to co-observe in such circumstances.

The choice of which class is observed rests with the observer but is subject to final agreement with the member of staff being observed.

8. How much notice will be given?

Observers will plan observation dates with staff well in advance but at least 5 working days' notice of the observation must be given.

9. The length and conduct of the observation

Observations will last between 45 to 60 minutes.

With prior agreement, either the observer or observee should explain to the students what is happening so that they understand and are comfortable with the process. During the observation, the observer should place themselves so that they can see what is going on but should not interfere in any way with the lesson, except on exceptional grounds where health and safety is threatened.

Where appropriate and practicable (for example, during practical lessons or where there is group work or project activity) the observer may look at the students' work. At the end of the lesson, they may discuss the lesson with the students.

10. Will there be an opportunity to discuss the observation beforehand?

It is essential that the observer meets with the observee before the observation to:

- discuss the criteria to be used
- discuss the session plan for the observed lesson
- review documentation, for example, syllabus, student roster, records, bibliographies
- discuss any issues relating to the session/group/learner evaluation/students needing support
- clarify any organisational issues
- establish a time for feedback to be given

11. How will feedback be given?

The feedback meeting will take place as soon as possible and within five working days of the observation, and will take the form of a written Feedback Report and a dialogue between the observer and the observee. This should be conducted within a confidential and mutually respectful environment with the aim of recognising good practice and developing individual teaching skills. The details of this feedback remain confidential between the observer and observee. The report and dialogue will cover areas of strength, areas of development/action points, and staff development needs. The observee may add their own comments concerning the observation and then the Feedback Report will be signed by both observer and observee to confirm that the process has been completed and accepted.

What happens if there is no agreement on the feedback?

This should only happen on very rare occasions but, where there remains a difference of viewpoint or interpretation between the observer and the observee, then the observer's comments are final but the

observee may attach his/her comments to the record of the observation. If the observer and co-observer fail to agree on the feedback even after a discussion, this should be referred to the Pro-Rector for Academic issues for resolution prior to feedback to the observee.

12. Follow up action and support

It is important for the aims of improving the quality of students' learning experience, of sharing good practice and of supporting staff to facilitate learning to be achieved that comprehensive and accessible support is put in place, such as:

- an ongoing programme of professional development on Learning and Teaching provided by both the faculty and the Instructional Support Centre. All staff should be offered access to relevant professional development opportunities but, if training is identified as essential on the Teaching Observation Feedback Report Form, then attendance and follow-up will be mandatory.
- support provided by the Dean's Office or a colleague
- where training needs have been identified and are common to several staff, specific group training
- good practice reports, workshops and team meetings

13. Where does the record of observation go?

The record of observation and any action points will be held by the Dean in a confidential Quality Assurance Folder in each Faculty. The observer and observee will retain a copy and a copy will be sent to the Pro-Rector for Academic Studies for quality assurance purposes. These will be checked centrally by the ISC for training issues. With co-observations, the Instructional Support Centre or other co-observers will retain copies of notes made and may forward these to the Dean of the relevant faculty and to the Pro-Rector for Academic issues in confidence.

14. What happens if the session observed is inadequate?

The observer and the observee will discuss significant areas where there is need for development and an action plan/timeline will be drawn up, including support to be provided. Staff will be supported by:

- the Dean's office and/or other relevant subject specialists
- the Instructional Support Centre

A re-observation will be carried out by the Dean or Pro-Rector for Academic Issues or a Rectorate nominee and co-observed by the Instructional Support Centre. The timing of this observation will reflect the nature of support identified. However, this would normally be within eight weeks. The procedures for the second observation will be the same as those used for the first observation with the following difference:

- The written feedback/action points produced following the first observation will be discussed during the pre-observation meeting.

In those instances where teaching performance remains inadequate following a second observation, then the issue will be referred to the Pro-Rector for Academic Issue for a decision on further support or action. As a last resort, the Pro-Rector for Academic issues may refer the matter to the Rector for contract review. This will only happen in exceptional circumstances and after the support process has been exhausted.

15. Relevant Documentation

The following guidance and forms should be used as part of the process:

- Teaching Observation – the Characteristics of Excellence (note and grid form)
- Teaching Observation Confirmation Request
- Lesson Plan Form (for an observed lesson only)
- Teaching Observation Feedback Form
- Co-observation and Support Feedback Form
- Use of Language in Providing Teaching Observation Feedback (guidance notes)

16. Comment and Review

This procedure will be overseen by the Pro-Rector for Academic Issues in liaison with the Deans of faculties and the Instructional Support Centre. Staff will be consulted and trained on its implementation and review.

It will be reviewed annually so that it remains active and effective. Staff should make constructive comments (confidential if preferred) via their Faculty Dean or the Rector for Academic Issues for consideration.

Teacher Education Policies in the Republic of Moldova

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The reorganisation of the Moldovan education system has involved the following changes: restructuring of the legislative framework, reform of the school curriculum and textbooks, modification of the evaluation system and the teachers' training system. A vitally important stage of the abovementioned reform was the Project of Reorganisation of the Moldovan System of General Education, which was initiated and financed by the World Bank and the government of the Republic of Moldova.

Teachers' continuous training has been aimed at preparing teachers for fulfilling the new objectives of the curriculum and employing new textbooks and evaluation system, thus promoting quality, competence and efficiency of the educational process.

The Project of the Reorganisation of the Moldovan System of General Education put forward an integral 'Curriculum – evaluation – continuous training' structure. The advantages of this approach are as follows:

1. ensuring coherence at the level of teacher education policies, standards and implementation;
2. ensuring the correlation of 'Curriculum – evaluation – teachers' continuous training'; and
3. employing material, human and didactic resources in an efficient way.

Continuous professional training in the Republic of Moldova is today integrated into the essence of permanent education or lifelong education, thus reconsidering the relationship between initial and continuous training. Continuous training focuses on four fundamental types of learning which are pillars of professional knowledge:

- *Learn to be,* which means acquiring tools for educational knowledge;

- *Learn to do,* which means that an individual interrelates with the educational environment;
- *Learn to live together with others,* which means to be able to co-operate with others while participating in educational activities; and
- *Learn to be and learn to become,* this being the element of value resulting from all three pillars mentioned above.

The general objectives of continuous professional training in the Republic of Moldova are:

- modernisation and development of the teachers' continuous training system according to the needs of modern society and international tendencies;
- integration of the system of teachers' continuous training into a single educational system;
- integration of the system of teachers' continuous training into the context of the educational reform in the Republic of Moldova;
- establishment of a motivational framework for the continuous training of teachers;
- facilitating the social integration of people according to their professional aspirations and educational system needs;
- establishment of favourable conditions for the development and maximal realisation of teachers' intellectual and creative potential;
- updating of knowledge and competencies, as well as improving professional qualifications in educational field;
- re-qualification, re-conversion determined by restructuring of the education system;
- guaranteeing the full use and design of national curricula;
- guaranteeing the implementation of new educational and informational technologies;
- professionalising teachers' careers in the Republic of Moldova;
- development of a 'continuous training programmes market' based on a genuine competition system whereby teachers can benefit from a diversified offer made by continuous training providers;

- modification of management through the continuous training of teaching staff; and
- ensuring continuity between the initial and continuous training and re-qualification of teachers.

With a view to improving and ensuring the quality of teachers' continuous training the draft **Strategy for professional continuous training in the educational system of the Republic of Moldova** has been prepared.

According to the draft Strategy, continuous professional training in the education system of the Republic of Moldova focuses on achieving the following goals:

- developing capabilities to design, implement, evaluate/self-evaluate educational activities;
- accumulating, innovating and producing new knowledge for continuous professional training;
- monitoring the performance and process of pupils' development;
- pedagogical communication, communication with parents and the community;
- respecting pupils' personal needs and characteristics taking their age into consideration;
- developing team work and efficient communication skills, as well as creating and maintaining an environment of understanding and respect;
- developing professional practice, self-training, self-evaluation, monitoring and improvement capacities; and
- developing capacities for designing and implementing new informational and communicational technologies.

With a view to implementing a permanent monitoring system of the teaching career of each teaching/managerial employee and improvements achieved in continuous training, **'Standards for the Continuous Training of Teachers'** have been elaborated and approved by the National Council for Curriculum as part of the Ministry of Education**.**

These Standards form a referential framework for the continuous development of professional skills in line with educational needs, existing tendencies and the requested didactic degree, as well as with the motivation of self-training and the motivation to perform a qualitative didactic activity.

The following fields of skills are included:

1. Specialty skill
2. Psycho-pedagogical skill
3. Psycho-social skill
4. Technical and technological skill
5. Managerial and career management skill

The professional skills aim at promoting an efficient policy concerning the development of teaching staff, which would guarantee the professional development right of each teacher and at acknowledging the teacher's role in cultivating and developing individual, social and European values.

Implementation of the Standards will contribute to maintaining and developing teachers' professional skills, and their involvement in continuous training. It will also add to the diversification of methods used in the continuous training of teachers, promotion of an efficient policy in view of teaching staff development which would guarantee the professional development right of each teacher, introduction of the professional credits system in teachers' continuous training; the insurance of trainers and teachers' mobility.

In order to implement the standards for teachers' continuous training some categories of continuous training programmes, types of programmes, and professional credits have been proposed.

Continuous training programmes represent the anticipation of a group of activities undertaken for the development of certain general and specific skills. Any continuous training programme is built on an adult learning concept and based on practicing and developing knowledge, skills and didactic framework action schemes.

Continuous training programmes will be developed on the basis of the following continuous training fields:

1. Psycho-pedagogy.
2. Didactics of Discipline and Specialty.
3. Informational and Communicational Technologies.

Flexibility of the continuous training programme reflects the fact that each participant will create his/her own continuous training way, which implies going over a common trunk (mandatory) and choosing one or more optional packages proposed by trainers.

The professional development and teaching staff continuous training will be accomplished by using a *professional credits system*. The system of professional credits represents a group of conventional numerical values used to measure and express the normal volume of work done by people being trained to learn/develop knowledge and skills in the fields foreseen by the programmes. The system of professional credits in continuous training is anticipated to have a triple role:

- as an element of the internal construction of continuous training programmes;
- as the evolution, promotion and obtaining of didactic degrees criterion; and
- as a norm for comparing training programmes and the transfer of credits in view of teaching staff mobility.

The system of professional credits supposes the accumulation of a certain unitary number of credits at the whole level of the continuous training system, which will be taken into consideration when obtaining didactic degrees or obtaining a certificate of professional continuous training and also in teaching staff evaluation at the school institution level. In this respect, each specialist will have a portfolio which will contain documents that prove the fact that he/she was involved in continuous training activities. The portfolios will be assessed by institutions competent in this field.

In order to put into service the standards for the continuous training of general secondary education teachers a *draft of the Regulations of the implementation of standards for the continuous training of general secondary education teachers* has been worked out.

The teaching staff involved in pre-university education will have over five years ***100 professional transferable credits*** which will be distributed as follows:

1. **Getting credits according to the categories of continuous training programmes:**
   - ***50 credits*** from long-term and medium-term continuous training programmes;
   - ***35 credits*** from thematic and modular continuous training programmes; and
   - ***15 credits*** from special continuous training programmes.

We recommend the teaching staff to operate their continuous training in such a way that the process of accumulating credits takes place during those five years.

2. **Getting credits according to the continuous training field**

Continuous training field	**Duration**	**Credits**
Psycho-pedagogy	18 hours	9
Didactics of Discipline	70 hours	35
Informational and Communicational Technologies	20 hours	10
Total	108 hours	54 credits

3. **Allocation of transferable professional credits to mandatory subjects**

Programme type	**Category of disciplines**	**No. of transferable professional credits**			**Total**
		Module I	**Module II**	**Module III**	
Long (I+II+III)	Mandatory	20	34	6	60
Medium (I+II)	Mandatory	20	34	-	54
Medium (I+III)		20	-	6	26
Medium (II+III)		-	34	6	40
Short (I)	Mandatory	20	-	-	20
Short (II)		-	34	-	34
Short (III)		-	-	6	6

Allocation of transferable professional credits to optional subjects

Programme type	Category of disciplines	No. of transferable professional credits			Total
		Module I	Module II	Module III	
Long (I+II+III)	Optional	14	22	4	40
Medium (I+II)	Optional	14	22	-	36
Medium (I+III)	Optional	14	-	4	18
Medium (II+III)	Optional	-	22	4	26
Short (I)	Optional	14	-	-	14
Short (II)	Optional	-	22	-	22
Short (III)	Optional	-	-	4	4

Allocation of transferable professional credits to mandatory and optional subjects

Programme type	Category of disciplines	No. of transferable professional credits			Total	
		Module I	Module II	Module III		
Long (I+II+III)	Mandatory Optional	20 14	34 22	6 4	60 40	100
Medium (I+II)	Mandatory Optional	20 14	34 22	- -	54 36	90
Medium (I+III)	Mandatory Optional	20 14	- -	6 4	26 18	44
Medium (II+III)	Mandatory Optional	- -	34 22	6 4	40 26	66
Short (I)	Mandatory Optional	20 14	- -	- -	20 14	34
Short (II)	Mandatory Optional	-	34 22	-	56	56
Short (III)	Mandatory Optional	- -	- -	6 4	10	10

4. **Getting credits reported to the local-national dimension:**
   On the completion of continuous training courses at the national level the specialist will acquire **– *70 credits*** and ***30 credits*** at the local level.

5. Receiving **credits according to the professional activities/actions carried out:**
   - delivering 2 to 4 demonstrative lessons which show the use of some innovations;
   - having 2 to 4 extracurricular activities aiming at professional and social integration;
   - the teacher has pupils with very good results – prize-winning places at competitions and olympiads;
   - participation in the 'Teacher of the Year' contest;
   - publication of an article in a scientific/methodical collection;
   - publication of a scientific-didactic article in a specialty magazine;
   - presentation of communications at profile manifestations /seminars, conferences, symposiums;
   - acting as a trainer/performer/co-ordinator within the framework of an educational project;
   - designing and publishing a textbook approved by the Ministry of Education and Youth; and
   - Taking a PhD.

Recommendations

Realisation of the decentralisation principles as part of the system of teachers' continuous training in the Republic of Moldova involves:

- the need to efficiently apply the research results in the field;
- improvement and ensuring the quality of teachers' continuous training;
- professionalisation of the education field;
- ensuring continuity between the systems of teachers' initial and continuous training;

- increasing the personal responsibility of each teacher for his/her own professional career;
- promotion of an efficient policy in the view of teaching staff development which would guarantee the professional development right of each teacher;
- design some mechanisms/procedures which would guarantee an agreement between the staff development policy and the needs of teaching/managerial staff;
- design continuous training programmes from the perspective of ensuring education quality;
- broadening international and trans-border co-operation with institutions of continuous training of teachers; and
- motivating teachers to learn throughout all of their lives.

The following aspects are to be taken into consideration during the process of professional continuous training:

- professional continuous training programmes' accrediting and evaluation;
- periodic updating of professional continuous training programmes;
- establishing an information and documentation system for professional continuous development;
- accreditation of the institutions competent for professional continuous training;
- co-operation with schools, institutions and organisations;
- co-ordinating the demand and supply at the national level;
- an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach of the professional continuous training programmes;
- professional continuous training on the basis of professional credits; and
- continuous training quality monitoring and insurance.

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Researching Teacher Education and Teacher Practice: the Croatian Perspective[1]

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1 Introduction

The discussions of why, how, who and for whom to do research in teacher education have dominated the educational sciences in the last decade, attracting widely polarised views. The critics raise issues at several levels. One relates to the general approach in the field which seems to consist of non-cumulative research data. Others point out problems with the external validity of data and their limited possibility to generalise from one context to another. Another set of issues relates to teachers' or policy-makers' motivation to apply new knowledge or to perceive it as useful. Still others point out that the main problem lies in the ineffective communication of research findings to the wider public (Brusling, 2005). Such serious critical arguments might give an impression that this line of research is at a dead end and carries the danger of being at least temporarily abandoned. But, in spite of such controversies, it seems that the evidence-based approach to teacher education and its importance for the effectiveness of teaching and learning has come into the focus of the broader public from policy-makers at the highest level to school authorities and school practitioners. This topic has become the central theme of several conferences at the EU level leading to the conclusion that not only researchers should expand their study of teaching and teacher education but that research competencies should also become the standard component of the teacher's toolkit (Niemi, 2005). At this moment, we can only speculate what was 'the tipping point'' (Gladwell, 2006) which helped to bridge the gap between theory, research and practice. Perhaps it was the use of new concepts describing desirable social goals such as the 'knowledge society'', 'learning society'' or 'lifelong learning for all''. Concepts from

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economics such as cost-benefit analysis, accountability, quality management have also taken hold in education, especially at the higher education level. This line of thought supported the establishment of generally recognised quality indicators in education and gave rise to a series of international comparative studies on the effectiveness of education in terms of learning outcomes. Contributions to strengthening research in teacher education might also have come from the implementation of practices such as the benchmarking of teacher education and teacher practices between education systems or analysing experiences from other fields. In fact, the notion of evidence-based practice was derived from a comparison with medical practice (Brussling, 2005). We could still add many items to our list of hypothetical factors which have contributed to recognition of the importance of research in and on teacher education which in itself might become a new interesting research topic.

In this paper our main interest lies in the examination of different aspects of research related to teacher education in Croatia. Our aim is to investigate whether the current process of the transformation of teacher education is supported by relevant research which might provide a more solid base for long-term planning, decision-making and the immediate improvement of school practice. In order to gain a clearer picture of the general conditions in which teacher education research is conducted, a SWOT analysis is performed. It is based on discussions with colleagues, a review of policy documents, and personal experience in the area. The main points of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. SWOT analysis of the current situation of teacher education research in Croatia

Strengths – new research centres and specialised research groups in teacher education, involvement of international stakeholders, postgraduate research-oriented programmes for teachers.	**Threats –** insufficient recognition of the importance of the evidence-based approach in TE at different levels, a lack of funds, a lack of institutional networking.
Weaknesses – insufficient number of trained researchers, a lack of a strategic approach to TE, insufficient research methodology in undergraduate study programmes, a lack of expert project reviewers, a lack of a scientific database in the field of TE research.	**Opportunities –** international co-operation and networking, motivation of local communities and schools to participate in teacher education research, specialised journals.

In this presentation we focus on outlining the major research trends in Croatian teacher education with some illustrations in each research stream and also try to propose a categorical framework for a future in-depth analysis of the field.

2 Domains in teacher education research

Teacher education research usually falls into two broad categories labelled 'research on teacher education and teaching practice' and 'research in teacher education and teacher practice'.

Research on teacher education can be further categorised according to different criteria. One of them is the use of research results at three levels:

a) at the macro level for defining policy and supporting decision-making;
b) at the intermediate level for curriculum development of pre-service and in-service teacher education; and
c) at the micro level for practice evaluation purposes conducted in specific settings such as university classrooms, practicing schools etc.

The second criteria could be an orientation towards outcomes/products or processes. The research orientation also defines the methodological approaches – qualitative or quantitative methods and the sources used.

Research in teacher education and teacher practice has several aspects:

a) Research related to subject-content knowledge – meaning that teachers should understand how knowledge is generated in their specific academic disciplines and should have knowledge of the most recent research results in research in the subjects they teach. They should develop critical scientific literacy and be able to teach their students how to critically read and evaluate scientific data.
b) Research related to the educational sciences – meaning that teachers should be able to understand and participate in research related to different variables in educational contexts.

c) Interdisciplinary research connecting subject-content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (teaching methodologies).
d) Evaluation research – meaning that teacher education should prepare teachers for using research methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching. It also means that teachers should learn how to interpret the data obtained, how to communicate and how to make evidence-based decisions.
e) A research-oriented attitude and the value of lifelong learning – meaning that teacher education should support teachers in developing new aspects of their professional role. They should perceive themselves as agents of change in a changing society and be analytical, open to new experiences, innovative and committed to lifelong learning.

3 Research on teacher education

a) Policy-oriented research

Recently the Croatian education system has changed at all levels, including the teacher education system. The Bologna Process has profoundly transformed initial teacher education, also with affects on in-service teacher education. It should be noted that the changes in initial teacher education also started from within, due to internally recognised needs for improvement. Policy-oriented research had an important role in those developments. That kind of research is relatively new in our educational tradition and the support of international programmes, experts and funds (EU-CARDS, World Bank, OECD, OSI etc.) played an important role in initiating such studies. Some of these programmes also supported institutional capacity-building, such as the *Centre for Research and Development in Education* in Zagreb. The Centre started its first larger scale educational policy-oriented research programme in 2003 with a set of interrelated research projects in curriculum development, teacher education, external evaluation of educational outcomes, and structural aspects of the school system. As an illustration of the abovementioned projects is the large-scale study *Development of a model of teacher lifelong education* carried out from 2001 to 2006 (Vizek Vidović, 2005). This study combines multiple sources and a multiple methods approach to examining Croatian teacher education within the EU context. The methodology used consisted of a content analysis of relevant national

and international documents, an analysis of existing statistical data combining with large-scale surveys of student teachers, practicing teachers and university teachers. Based on the results of this study general recommendations for the development of initial and in-service teacher education model were proposed.

Some research projects on the national teacher education system, supported by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport and by international institutions and grants, were also carried out at the universities. The projects *Programme for the acquisition of educational competencies of subject teachers* (Domović, 2005) and *Structure of lifelong teacher education* (Radeka, 2007-2010) fall into that category. Further, some studies were initiated by the Ministry itself, such as *Teacher Education in Croatia and Other European Countries* (Domović and Oldroyd, 2005).

b) Curriculum development and Bologna Process monitoring studies

Implementation of the Bologna Process has had special significance for initial teacher education for various reasons. First, the education of prospective primary teachers has been upgraded from vocational college to the university level. So, the duration of education of all school teachers (classroom and subject, primary and secondary level) has been equalised with other university programmes leading to an MA degree. Moreover, the third cycle (Ph.D. programme) has been opened to primary teachers, an opportunity which did not exist before. Those structural changes were accompanied by the new requirements for teacher educators and for curriculum development. Structural changes were also introduced in the education of prospective secondary school teachers. All teacher faculties educating secondary school teachers adopted a two-cycle model and in some cases a simultaneous model has been replaced by a consecutive one. The implementation of these changes was facilitated by the participation of Croatian experts in EU projects supporting and monitoring the Bologna Process. These projects also had a strong research component providing indicators for comparisons and benchmarking.

Examples of such EU projects in which Croatian representatives are participating are *The Tuning Education Structures in Europe – Phase III: Validation, Dissemination and Further Development and Phase IV Curricular*

Reform Taking Place: Learning Outcomes and Competencies in Higher Education (Education group).

Some projects in this category were aimed at regional co-operation, such as: *Improving of teaching quality in South-East Europe, Enhancing the professional development of education practitioners and teaching/learning practices in SEE countries, Tuning Teacher Education Curricula in the Western Balkans,* and *Regional Tuning – Towards the European Higher Education Area* in which Croatian experts have been participating.

Special projects have also been developed aimed at curriculum development of teacher education in specific fields. Croatian experts were mostly engaged in projects related to the foreign language teacher education (for example, the *Tempus project – Foreign languages at primary level: training of teachers).*

There are also projects which are oriented to the curriculum development of in-service teacher education and training. These projects can be categorised as need assessment screening. Recently, national agencies (Education and Training Agency and the Vocational Training Agency) which are responsible for in-service teacher training have begun systematically collecting evidence to support their strategic planning in this area.

c) Small-scale research conducted in specific settings such as university classrooms, practicing schools

Such research has a relatively long tradition in Croatia and the results of these studies are usually published in several specialised Croatian journals such as: *Metodika, Odgojne znanosti, Napredak, Metodički ogledi, Strani jezici* etc. At the moment, it is difficult to categorise them by topics because there are no systematic bibliographies or meta-analyses in the field. Regarding research methodology, an inspection of several volumes revealed the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodology. In that respect, it can be observed that the most advanced research methodology, including experimental designs, has been used in research into the teaching of foreign languages.

4 Research in teacher education

a) Research related to subject-content knowledge

In Croatia and some other countries (Buchberger, Campos, Kallos, and Stephenson, 2000) there was a long tradition of a dichotomy in the education of primary (classroom) and subject teachers (upper primary and secondary). Subject teachers were practically always educated at universities, meaning that their study programmes always had a strong component of research methodology in their specific subject/academic discipline and the requirements for their educators combined both teaching and research competencies. On the other hand, up until 2005 classroom teachers were educated at teachers' colleges which offered tertiary vocational degrees. In other words, classroom teacher education was more oriented to the acquisition of practical skills and their educators were not obliged to participate in scientific projects and research. Since 2005, when classroom teacher education was upgraded to the university level, the research component of the respective academic field has been introduced into the curriculum.

b) Research related to the educational sciences

In comparison to research in subject-content knowledge, the position of educational sciences research in teacher education was almost the reverse. In the education of subject teachers the dominance of academic disciplines was so strong that very little room was left for the teaching of the educational sciences and teaching methodologies (between 7% – 10 % of total study time) (Vizek Vidović and Vlahović Štetić, 2003). So, paradoxically, at the institutions where educational scientists were doing educational research in disciplines such as psychology, pedagogy, sociology, their results were rarely communicated to prospective teachers. The Bologna Process has offered a new chance for integrating the educational sciences and research into new curricula for prospective subject teachers. In developing new curricula, a general recommendation has been formulated stating that the scope of these topics should be increased by up to 20 percent and more. In approximately half of the programmes for subject teachers these recommendations have been taken into account.

Regarding the education of future primary teachers, traditionally more space in the curriculum was devoted to the educational sciences and teaching methodologies (between 40 to 60 percent). This ratio has been kept in the new Bologna programmes, also offering opportunities for developing entirely new courses in research methodology.

It should be emphasised that these structural changes in initial teacher education have opened up a whole new range of possibilities for the advancement of educational research by establishing the third cycle of studies – doctoral studies and master specialisations.

c) Interdisciplinary research connecting subject-content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (teaching methodologies)

This field of research is still underdeveloped and consequently underrepresented in the curriculum. It should be noted that interdisciplinarity in teaching and research is missing in general, partially due to a lack of structural support. Until recently the categorisation of scientific fields, the system of research funding and the system of academic advancement did not support interdisciplinarity in teaching nor in research. The proposed new act on scientific fields developed by the National Scientific Council opens the possibility of establishing interdisciplinary scientific fields. It might be expected that in the future this will enhance the development of interdisciplinary research in the field of teacher education.

d) Evaluation research

This aspect of research in teacher education (also action research, reflections on school practice etc.) has recently been introduced into the courses of teaching methodologies or school practice, especially in the fields of foreign language and Croatian language teaching.

It should be pointed out that previously practicing teachers were chiefly acquainted with those topics through in-service training, especially when provided in co-operation with foreign experts.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

Regarding research in and on teacher education in Croatia it can be concluded that it is still quite underdeveloped. On the other hand, it can be also observed that recently the general level of awareness of different stakeholders about the importance of such research has been significantly raised. The structural changes introduced by implementation of the Bologna Process have created a framework for more intensive developments in this field.

The key factors which should be taken into account regarding the enhancement of teacher education research are as follows:

1. It is necessary to invest in capacity-building for teacher education research at the institutional level. Efforts should be directed to the development of an institutional infrastructure within and outside of universities. It means that the empowerment of existing as well as establishment of new research units is necessary.
2. Special attention should be paid to the development of research potential among teacher students at all levels with an emphasis on doctoral students. One important mechanism to achieve this goal is the academic mobility of students and university teachers. In that respect, capacity-building is also needed for student teacher educators, specifically for mentoring and supervising student projects and theses.
3. Financial instruments should be provided in order to support interdisciplinary research and the networking of expert groups at national and international levels.
4. In order to foster high-level attainments in teacher education research the concepts of research quality assurance and research benchmarking should be widely introduced and applied across teacher education.

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New Competencies in Slovak Teacher Training Programmes

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Introduction

In recent years many countries have been seeking ways to improve their schools and to better respond to new social and economic expectations. The demands on schools and teachers have become more complex. Society now expects schools to deal effectively with different languages and student backgrounds, to be sensitive to culture and gender issues, to promote tolerance and social cohesion, to respond effectively to disadvantaged students and students with learning or behavioural problems, to use new technologies, and to keep pace with rapidly developing fields of knowledge and approaches to student assessment.

Improving the efficiency of schooling depends strongly on ensuring that competent people want to work as teachers, that their teaching is of high quality, and that all students have access to high quality teaching. Teachers are now expected to play much broader roles, taking into account the individual development of children and young people, the management of learning processes in the classroom, the development of the entire school as a 'learning community' and connections with the local community and the wider world.

Teachers also need to be capable of preparing students for a society and an economy in which they will be expected to be self-directed learners, able and motivated to keep learning throughout their lifetime. That is why teacher issues are often a priority for public policy and are likely to become even more so in future years.

Impact of Social Changes on the Role of Teachers

Social changes, the diversity of learner intake and changes in the teaching environment influence the role of the teacher and have an impact on several areas of the teacher's work:

1. Promotion of new learning outcomes contributing to the citizenship education of learners such as:
   - living in a multicultural and tolerant society;
   - living according to sustainable lifestyles regarding environmental issues;
   - dealing with gender equity issues in family, work and social life;
   - living as a European citizen; and
   - managing their own career development.

2. Promotion of the development of competencies of learners for the knowledge and lifelong-learning society such as:
   - motivation to learn beyond compulsory education;
   - learn how to learn/autonomous learning;
   - information processing;
   - digital literacy;
   - creativity and innovation;
   - problem-solving;
   - entrepreneurship;
   - communication; and
   - visual culture.

3. Linking the development of new curriculum competencies with school subjects.

4. Working in restructured ways in the classroom:
   - dealing with social, cultural and ethnic diversity of learners;
   - organising learning environments and facilitating learning processes; and
   - working in teams with teachers and other professionals involved in the learning process of the same learners.

5. Working 'beyond the classroom' and with social partners:

- working on the school curriculum, organisational development and evaluation; and
- collaborating with parents and other social partners.

6. Integrating ICT in formal learning situations and in all professional practice.

7. Increasing levels of teaching professionalism:
   - acting in an investigative or problem-solving way; and
   - assuming greater responsibility for their own professional development in a lifelong-learning perspective.

The Concept of Teacher Competencies

Traditionally the notion of teacher competence has often been perceived in terms of behaviour or in terms of individual psychological attributes. Evidence of teacher competencies has been based on direct observation of performances and/or products in predictable situations, reflecting a technical concept of teaching. Teacher competencies have been conceived of in terms of underlying stable, personal, and situation-independent characteristics providing a basis for an excellent performance.

The recent concern with teacher competence has been expressed as a need for a more integrated concept denoting teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes in context while performing professional tasks. Scholars have been moving towards a more integrated approach to competence-based training and assessment based on the notion that competence is a relational concept, bringing together the knowledge, skills and abilities of the individual and the professional tasks to be performed in particular situations.

Schools and classrooms are complex, dynamic environments and the identification of the effects of these varied factors, and how they influence and relate with each other for different types of students and different types of learning has been, and continues to be, a major focus of educational research. But there are still many important aspects of teacher quality not captured by the commonly used indicators such as

qualifications, teaching experience and indicators of academic ability or subject-matter knowledge. The teacher characteristics that are harder to measure, but which can be vital to student learning, also include the ability to convey ideas in clear and convincing ways, to create effective learning environments for different types of students, to foster productive teacher-student relationships, to be enthusiastic and creative, and to work effectively with colleagues and parents.

Notions of competencies as developable abilities of the person contrast with notions in much of the research of competencies as discrete behaviours. Five abilities are identified as generic teaching skills:

- *conceptualisation* – integrating disciplinary knowledge with educational frameworks and a broad understanding of human development in order to plan and implement the learning processes;
- *diagnosis* – relating observations of behaviour and situations using frameworks in order to foster learning;
- *co-ordination* – managing resources effectively to support learning goals;
- *communication* – using oral, written and media modes of communication to structure and reinforce learning processes; and
- *integrative interaction* – demonstrating professional responsibility in the learning environment.

Student learning is influenced by many factors, including:

- students' skills, abilities and attitudes expectations, motivation and behaviour;
- family and community resources, attitudes and support;
- peer group skills, attitudes and behaviour;
- school organisation, resources and climate;
- curriculum structure and content; and
- teacher skills, knowledge, attitudes and practices.

The quality of the educational service, however, depends to a great extent on the quality of teachers as well. The standard then lists the following four components:

- professional values and personal commitments;
- professional knowledge and understanding;

- professional and personal attributes; and
- professional action.

Especially important are professional values and personal commitments which effective teachers should develop:

- effectiveness in promoting learning in the classroom;
- critical self-evaluation and development;
- collaboration and influence; and
- educational and social values.

Besides professional values, teacher competencies are certain qualities of the teacher which enable them to employ the individual competencies and apply them in a professional context. The competencies are grouped in five areas:

1. understanding the curriculum, and professional knowledge;
2. subject knowledge and subject application;
3. teacher strategies and techniques, and classroom management;
4. assessment and recording of pupils' progress; and
5. foundation for further professional development.

Some examples of areas of broadened teacher responsibility are as follows:

- *At the individual student level*
  - initiating and managing learning processes
  - responding effectively to the learning needs of individual learners
  - integrating formative and summative assessment

- *At the classroom level*
  - teaching in multi-cultural classrooms
  - new cross-curricular emphases
  - integrating students with special needs

- *At the school level*
  - working and planning in teams
  - evaluation and systematic improvement planning
  - ICT use in teaching and administration
  - management and shared leadership
- *At the level of parents and the wider community*

- providing professional advice to parents
- building community partnerships for learning

Teachers of the 21st century should have profound knowledge of their subject area and have the skills needed to teach students successfully. The skills the teacher requires include being able to:

- organise student learning opportunities;
- manage student learning progression;
- deal with student heterogeneity;
- develop student commitment to working and learning;
- work in teams;
- participate in school curriculum and organisation development;
- promote parent and community commitment to school;
- use new technologies in their daily practice;
- tackle professional duties and ethical dilemmas; and
- manage their own professional development.

Policy Priorities for the Development of Teacher Competencies

Key issues in a quality teacher agenda include more attention to the criteria for selection into both initial teacher education and teaching employment, ongoing evaluation throughout one's teaching career to identify areas for improvement, recognising and rewarding effective teaching, and ensuring that teachers have the resources and support they need to meet the high expectations.

Countries need to have clear and concise statements concerning what teachers are expected to know and be able to do, and these teacher profiles need to be embedded throughout the school and teacher education systems. The profile of teacher competencies needs to derive from the objectives for student learning, and provide profession-wide standards and a shared understanding of what counts as accomplished teaching. The teacher profiles need to encompass strong subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical skills, the capacity to work effectively with a wide range of students and colleagues, to contribute to the school and the profession, and the capacity to continue developing. The profile

could express different levels of performance appropriate to beginning teachers, experienced teachers, and those with bigger responsibilities.

The stages of initial teacher education, induction and professional development need to be much better interconnected to create a more coherent learning and development system for teachers. A statement of teacher competencies and performance standards at different stages of their career should provide a framework for a teacher development continuum where much more attention will need to be focused on supporting teachers in the early stages of their career, and in providing incentives and resources for their ongoing professional development.

A more flexible system of teacher education should provide more routes into the profession, including through: postgraduate study following an initial qualification in a subject-matter field; opportunities for those who started in schools as paraprofessionals or teachers' aides to gain full qualifications that build on their experience in schools; and possibilities for mid-career changes to combine reduced teaching loads and concurrent participation in teacher preparation programmes. It should involve close linkages with schools.

Teachers need to be active agents in analysing their own practices in the light of professional standards, and their own students' progress in the light of standards for student learning.

Consequently, schools need to have greater responsibility – and accountability – for teacher selection, working conditions, and development. However, to exercise these responsibilities effectively, it is clear that many schools will need more skilled leadership teams and stronger support.

Teacher Training in Slovakia

Slovak higher education institutions, including our university – Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, joined the European Higher Education Area 10 years ago (in 1998) when the new higher education legislation was issued and the document *Further Development of Higher Education in Slovakia. Policy for the 21st Century – Millennium* was published (Rosa et al., 2000). The implementation of these

documents creates the basis for the involvement of Slovak higher education institutions into the established European Education and Research Area and for the reform of higher education institutions in Slovakia within 10 to 15 years.

The Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra has also introduced the main principles of the Bologna Declaration into its study programmes. One of the most important measures the university has adopted in the field of study programmes has become the introduction and implementation of ECTS. Among other recently introduced measures with a very positive impact on our students we can also mention the possibility to make decisions about the selection of contents and forms of education, the possibility to transfer credits gained during various forms of student mobilities and the system of academic degrees which is comparable and compatible within different European countries.

Teacher training in Slovakia before 1989 was closely connected with the social and political situation in the country. Teachers were trained to work in a highly homogeneous environment of identical state schools with unified national curricula. Teacher training study programmes lasted five years and teachers were trained separately for primary schools (in all subjects) and separately for lower and higher secondary schools (in two subjects).

One of the consequences of entering the European area has become the diversification of teacher training reflecting the real world where learners are educated in heterogeneous education institutions providing different educational programmes with a variety of educational aims and goals. New legislation copying the Bologna principles has introduced three-year bachelor study programmes and two-year master study programmes for future teachers. However, we still lack legislation to specify the role of graduates from bachelor programmes in our schools. Other frequently discussed topics are changes in teacher training curricula. Experts in education find it vital to change aims and contents of teacher training in such a way that they are not focused just on knowledge learning and acquisition but require changes in the teacher training graduates' profile which should reflect changes in professional attitudes, skills and abilities.

A fundamental requirement was determined in the Millennium project to change 'subject' teacher training for the training of educators who are able to cultivate a man and his world and to improve the training of school managers. The new teacher's profile has recently been put in agreement with the new curricula for primary and secondary schools where former individual school subjects (for example, Slovak Language, Foreign Language, Physics, Chemistry, Geography etc.) have been replaced by a complex of seven educational areas to be taught: Language and Communication, Man and Nature, Man and World, Man and Society, Mathematics and Informatics, Art and Culture, Health and Exercise.

A European Teacher

Teachers in the European Union not only educate future citizens of their particular member country, but also support them in becoming future generations of European citizens. They work within a national framework which emphasises the need for a national identity as a basis for transnational awareness within European society. The term 'European dimension' has been used to balance national and transnational values in educational policy-making and the notion of a European teacher is reflected in our understanding of the above stated phenomena.

Thus a European teacher should see himself or herself as someone with roots in one particular country, but at the same time belonging to a greater European whole. This co-existence of a national identity and transnational awareness, diversity within unity, is therefore a key aspect of a developed European identity with an open mind vis-à-vis the world at large.

Besides, a European teacher has relevant knowledge of other European education systems and, possibly, of educational policy matters on the EU level. They value their own education system and view it in relation to other European ones. They have knowledge of European and world affairs and are aware of European history and its influence on contemporary European society.

They have a positive relationship with their own culture and are open to other cultures. They know how to behave in other cultures in a confident and non-dominant way and see heterogeneity as a valuable aspect and respect any differences.

In addition, a European teacher speaks more than one European language with different levels of competence and is able to teach subjects in languages other than their first language.

Further, a European teacher has such an education which enables them to teach in any European country, to exchange curricular content and methodologies with colleagues from other European countries, to pay attention to and learn from different teaching and learning traditions. Joint programmes and degrees offered by education institutions in European countries can enhance the development of European professionalism, as can many of the opportunities offered by modern technologies.

Conclusion

If there is anything like a European teacher, there must be some way of comparing the formal features of Europe's teacher education systems. An increase in compatibility between European qualifications and in the transparency of graduate achievement is central to the Bologna/Copenhagen Processes and would also remove obstacles from teacher mobility. That is why a European teacher experiences the benefits of the European Union in part through easy mobility. This mobility encompasses studying abroad and learning languages as well as getting acquainted with other EU countries' cultures. The European teacher may seek employment in other countries and use the exchange programmes offered by the European Union.

Consequently, a European teacher facilitates mobility among their students by enabling them to have physical and virtual contact with peers from other European countries. This helps prepare for Europe-wide employability and, eventually, workplace mobility.

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Nordic Teacher Education Programmes in a Period of Transition: The End of a Well-established and Long Tradition of 'Seminarium'-based Education?

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Teacher education is undergoing a process of transformation. The 'seminarium'-based education, which has been the foundation of teacher education in the Nordic countries for more than 200 years, no longer seems to be an adequate basis for the performance of teaching in modern knowledge societies. The 'seminarium' tradition in teacher education is under pressure, there are many indications that this tradition has reached a cusp. In evaluations of the Danish (2003), Swedish (2005) and Norwegian (2006) teacher education programmes, the criticism of and concerns regarding the existing programmes are confirmed even though education in Norway and Sweden has been transferred away from the 'seminariums'. Why is it that the 'seminarium' tradition now seems inadequate? Why is teacher education in a process of transformation? The replies depend on whether teacher education is observed from the outside, i.e. from the environment's external perspective or from the inside, i.e. from its self-conception. It is conspicuous, but maybe not surprising, that the environment represents a much more critical view on teacher education than teacher education itself.

Environmental parameters

The pressure on teacher education as a traditional 'seminarium' education, whether it actually occurs at a 'seminarium' or at a place where the 'seminarium' tradition is still strong as in the Nordic teacher education programmes, comes from the political system, research and the school.

Policy

From a political perspective, two issues are at stake. The first is the adaptations to the Bologna Process in which all European countries are involved. This process, which was launched with the Bologna Declaration of June 1999, aims at creating a European higher education area. Important elements in this endeavour are the organisation of a 3-2-3 structure with three-year Bachelor programmes, two-year Master programmes and three-year PhD programmes, the introduction of ECTS-points (the European Credit Transfer System) for measuring the volume of full educational programmes and elements of single programmes, diploma supplements for making it easier to compare exams in different educational programmes and countries, and the introduction of quality assurance systems.

The second issue is that the Nordic education systems are in a period of adaptation to the accountability policy that, with certain differences between the countries, has become the prevailing political strategy for public institutions. Accountability policy concerns *who* can be held responsible by *whom* for *what* and with *which* consequences in the full range from political decision-makers through national as well as regional administration, educational institutions to teachers. In the past two decades this strategy has been developed via different reforms leading to the decentralisation of tasks, distribution of responsibility and competencies to local authorities, and the introduction of frame management as a substitute to the inflexible detail-management of previous times. To this must be added the introduction of elements such as market control mechanisms and competition between public and private enterprises, and the introduction of quality assurance systems. To realise this policy, public standards, including strategies for their use, and test systems have been introduced together with different forms of accreditation systems.

The accountability strategy is based on the basic assumption that the different levels must be given freedom and autonomy to make decisions on local issues. Accountability enables the different levels to document and compare quality in order to facilitate local authority. This policy does not abolish or reduce state control but changes the state's control from the control of processes to the control of results. Educational policy has been changed to manage by expectations and the control of outputs.

Standards and certification systems reflect society's expectations as to what students in the education system are supposed to learn, and tests and evaluations are employed to evaluate whether these expectations are satisfied (Rasmussen, 2007).

Research

PISA, TIMMS and a series of reading studies have led to a focus on the performance of the school. These studies have documented that students in Nordic countries (with Finland as an exception) score poorly in reading and maths, and that a substantial performance gap exists between students in several of the Nordic countries.

The research into teacher education that defines 'teacher quality' according to a student's achievements shows that the teacher is the single most important factor that adds value to student learning, overshadowing previous student achievement, class size, ethnic and socio-economic status (Hanushek, 2002; Rivers & Sanders, 2002). The teacher education research that defines teacher quality according to teachers' qualifications is also engaged in the identification of teachers' competencies of specific relevance for creating better student outcomes. This research has pointed out that students learn more from teachers with a teacher education certificate and with high grades in their final examination certificate (Linda Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Rice, 2003). It also shows that students achieve more when taught by teachers who are able to combine subject-matter knowledge, subject didactic knowledge and teaching competencies (Linda Darling-Hammond & Brasford, 2005; Linda Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Helmke & Weinert, 1997; Weinert *et al.*, 1990).

The school

In relation to the school, a transition away from normative guiding pictures based on the philosophy of man and society towards an emphasis on research-based knowledge as indication for educational praxis can be observed. The evaluations of Danish, Norwegian and Swedish teacher education concurrently show that national as well as international research results, especially in subject didactics, have to be drawn into teacher education and that students must be educated in a way that enables them to critically interpret research that shows what works and what works better than something else with regard to

obtaining the best possible student outcomes. The OECD speaks about teaching as a *research-based profession* (OECD, 2003), and the EU about an *academic and scientific foundation* in teacher education (European Commission, 2005).

In teacher education this policy change has been named academicisation, which is slightly misleading and could potentially be damaging not only for teacher education but also for other professional education programmes. Instead of academicisation, we should rightly speak of the research foundation of these programmes with the purpose of making practitioners research-informed practitioners. It is not a question of making professional education more theoretical as such, but of what kind of theory or knowledge is being applied. Following a brief introduction to the conceptualisation of society in sociological systems theory, I will discuss the relationship between three different forms of theory and theoretical knowledge in teacher education.

A functionally differentiated society

In contemporary sociological systems theory, society is described as differentiated into a number of systems such as economics, politics, science, art, law, education, health etc., with each handling their own specific function (Luhmann, 1997). Two sets of concepts are used to describe the individual systems. One comprises function, performance and reflexivity; the other media, code and programme. Generally speaking, each system maintains its *function* in relation to society as such, its *performance* in relation to other systems and its *reflexivity* in relation to itself, i.e. its function and performance. Systems specify their function according to their own success criteria (media and code) and its own developed activities (programme). Functionally differentiated systems have developed individual self-descriptions as descriptions of their identity. Such descriptions are like theories produced within a system for the system named *theories of reflexivity*. In this context, the interest is focused on society's systems of science and education.

The *system of science* constitutes itself from the form of communication that has production of new knowledge as its function, and contribution of new knowledge of relevance to other systems as its performance. Its theory of reflexivity concerns theories of science, currently epistemology

in particular. The symbolic generalised media of communication is truth, the code connected to this media is true/false, and the programmes that explain how the code can be applied to the media are related to research methodology.

The function of the *education system* is education (fostering, upbringing, teaching, Bildung) and its performance has traditionally sought to provide the rising generation with knowledge and competencies of importance and value. Today, its purpose is not restricted to the new generation but includes the full course of life in a lifelong learning perspective that emphasises that the ability to learn also has to be learned. Learning to learn is not the aim of the education system but a theme of reflexivity related to its function and performance. The full course of life has become the symbolic media of communication, which is connected to the primary code mediable/not-mediable (+ teaching/- teaching) and the secondary code better/worse. The programmes of the education system are curriculum theory as well as curricula.

These distinctions date back to Johan Friedrich Herbart who, in his lectures from 1802, made a distinction between what he called 'the three circles of pedagogy', namely pedagogy as science, pedagogy as education in the art of teaching and pedagogy as a more accidental interaction (Herbart, 1887, s. 284). This distinction is quite similar to Emile Durkheim when pointing out that pedagogy is not teaching but reflections on teaching with the aim of guiding the teaching practice, and further his distinction between on the one hand pedagogy as a category of reflection occupied with theories about what teaching ideally should be and on the other educational science aimed at studying teaching as it appears and consequently has educational practice as well as educational theories of reflection as its object (Durkheim, 1975 (1914), s. 60f.). In contemporary terminology, it is possible, as has been done above, to distinguish between educational research, educational professionalism and educational practice with each of these being related to a specific form of knowledge, namely scientific knowledge, professional knowledge and praxis knowledge.

The science of education and education comprise two totally different occupations and sets of criteria: The researcher is committed to truth, the educator to producing good or better student outcomes. The following table aims to present a survey of the above explanation:

	Media	Code	Programme	Function	Performance	Reflexivity
Science	Truth	True/false	Theory and methods	New knowledge	Relevant new knowledge	Theory of science
Education	Course of life	+ Teaching/ - teaching Better/worse	Curricula	Education	Learning	Professional knowledge

From this, it is obvious that theory is to be found in the system of science as well as in society's other systems, but as two different kinds of theory. The system of science is in the particular position that it produces theory, but all systems produce and use theory in the sense of the theory of reflexivity.

Theories of reflexivity are theories of praxis and praxis technologies. In science, such technologies are oriented to the production of true knowledge, and in education at how it is possible, through teaching, to achieve better student outcomes. Reflexive theory must be able to explain praxis in a way that makes it possible to intervene to make the performance better. Therefore, it concerns 'what works' and the 'best practice'. *Scientific theory* is, unlike reflexive theory, able to restrict itself to only explain a phenomenon; it does not necessarily need to explain how to intervene. The theory of science has to live up to certain demands to methodology, theoretical anchoring, and the unambiguous use of concepts, while the theory of reflexivity merely needs to be expedient for the system. Scientific theory is evaluated according to validity and reliability, while reflexive theory is evaluated according to its ability to solve context-related problems; i.e. if it works or is socially robust (Nowotny *et al.*, 2001, p. 179). Scientific theory is aimed at establishing general explanations, while the theory of reflexivity is aimed at intervention in specific, local conditions in order to solve specific problems. Such differences resemble those used to distinguish between what has been called mode-1 and mode-2 research (Nowotny *et al.*, 2001) as two different approaches to knowledge production (Rasmussen *et al.*, 2007, pp. 123-127). The distinction between the theory of science and the theory of reflexivity is illustrated in the following table:

	Theory of science	Theory of reflexivity
Name	Mode-1	Mode-2
Purpose	Explaining, understanding	Intervention
Criteria	Scientific theory and methodology Validity and reliability	What works Expediency
Ambition	Generalised knowledge	Contextualised knowledge

Forms of knowledge in teacher education

Education as a theory is produced in the system of science as well as in the education system but scientific theory is not always directly applicable to and for praxis, and the theory of reflexivity is not directly applicable to research because the theoretical approaches are constructed from different premises and relate to different systems with different preferences and criteria (codes). The theory and knowledge of reflexivity obtains legitimacy from the 'instructive/not-instructive' code because it offers a contribution to the optimisation of the systems' function and performance. From this and as shown in the next table it is clear that three different forms of knowledge are in play: 1) 'Educational praxis knowledge' as the form of knowledge developed by practitioners in each of society's different realms on the basis of experience; 2) 'educational reflexive knowledge' or 'professional knowledge' as a form of knowledge developed by the professions through reflections on how to improve praxis; and 3) research knowledge as a result of research praxis with its demands on methodology, theoretical anchoring and a clear application of concepts. Knowledge is not only produced in science but also in society's other functional systems; they so to speak embody a knowledge production of their own.

Science		**Education**	
Educational research		Educational intervention	
Research praxis	Theory of reflexivity	Educational praxis	Theory of reflexivity
(3) Research knowledge	Theory of science	**(1) Educational praxis knowledge**	**(2) Educational professional knowledge**

These different forms of knowledge are not to be considered as locked in a hierarchical relationship with each other; they are different but one is not superior to the other. *Scientific knowledge* is new validated knowledge. It is typically evaluated in peer reviews according to whether it contributes something new, whether the results are well-substantiated, whether they are in accordance with the applied scientific methods and whether the findings seem to be true. Scientific knowledge aims at being universal knowledge and measure up to the best in the world. *Praxis knowledge* is knowledge of what works, but it also takes into account whether what works then works reasonably. Efficient praxis is one thing; it is something else whether the professional teacher wants to expose people (students) to it; i.e. if it is acceptable according to moral and democratic standards. Praxis knowledge is a balancing of these two criteria which probably is the reason that questions concerning ethics and democracy play such an important role in teacher education. The suggestion offered here is to combine the double code of *what works* and what works *reasonably* within one code, namely of *useful/useless*, as the criteria that teachers apply when they examine the knowledge they are offered. For the practitioner, knowledge can be ever so true, but what counts is whether it is useful in teaching practice. Between these two forms of knowledge (scientific knowledge and praxis knowledge), professional knowledge is 'wedged in' as a specific form of knowledge. *Professional knowledge* is characterised by applying two codes at once, namely the codes of the forms of knowledge it is wedging in between. On one side, it is the true/false code of scientific knowledge and, on the other side, it is the useful/useless code of praxis knowledge. Professional knowledge has to take both of these codes into account in order to coordinate them in a third code for professional knowledge which I propose we call *instructive/not-instructive*. Professional knowledge is a form of knowledge that is gaining ground as an independent form of knowledge with the aim of guiding professional praxis.

Science		**Education**	
Educational research		Educational intervention	
Research praxis	Theory of reflexivity	Educational praxis	Theory of reflexivity
(3) Research knowledge	Theory of science	**(1) Educational praxis knowledge**	**(2) Educational professional knowledge**
True/false		Useful/useless	Instructive/ not-instructive

In teacher education, it seems particularly important to acknowledge these different forms of knowledge and the ways they are generated. Their strength lies in their dissimilarity. It is important to stress that they do not form a hierarchy. Each of the three forms of knowledge has different applications in different contexts. Scientific knowledge is expected to be new true knowledge of importance for teacher education, and possibly also for teaching praxis. Professional knowledge is knowledge that is instructive for praxis in a more direct way. It seems naïve to think that scientific knowledge or any other knowledge is directly transferable to practitioners or to professional praxis. If scientific knowledge is going to play a role in teacher education and in professional praxis; and if professional knowledge is going to play a role in educational praxis these forms of knowledge have to be taken into consideration by the teachers in teacher education and by the professional practitioners in their planning and accomplishment of their practices.

Research-informed teachers

When the pressure to make teacher education more research-oriented is observed from the perspective of these three forms of knowledge, it is easy to see that it is not just a question of transforming professional education into academic education. The demand for more research-based teacher education is not to be reduced to a simple question of academicisation. The demand for research-based teacher education has been met differently in the Nordic countries, as is evident from their different lengths, institutional placements and legislation. These

differences are, to a great extent, to be understood from the degree of attachment to the 'seminarium' tradition, in which all of the Nordic teacher education programmes are rooted.

As far back as the 1970s Finland decided (as the first Nordic country) to change its teacher education into research-based education by giving it to the universities and adjusting it to the faculty and department structure of the universities. Since the summer of 2005 Finland has also adapted its teacher education programme to the principles of the Bologna Process. This has been done without major difficulties because the 3+2 structure was already implemented. Educators in Finnish teacher education hold a Master's degree and have as university teachers the time and obligation for research (Niemi, 2006; Sjöberg & Hansén, 2006).

Sweden made its teacher education programme research-based in the 1970s by placing it at colleges. College education is, according to the college reform of 1977, placed within the jurisdiction of the universities. The law emphasises that education must rest on a scientific basis and have a clear attachment to research. Even though teacher education in principle is research-based, many colleges had a tenuous connection to research at best so the 2001 reform of teacher education underlined strong expectations to a connection research. A research connection is seen as one of the greatest challenges to teacher education in Sweden (Askling, 2006; Högskoleverket, 2005).

In 1973 Norway decided to move its teacher education into the world of academia by making 'seminariums' (*lærerskoler*) to colleges. With the college reform of 1994 teacher education became placed at university colleges and universities. Both places are under the same common jurisdiction which includes a demand for research-based education. Even though it has been required for colleges to carry out research and development work since the 1970s, it has been a long process to ensure enough qualified teachers, i.e. teachers that hold a PhD. At most colleges, teachers are assured research time. At some colleges, research time is allocated strategically based on research applications (Haug, 2003; NOKUT, 2006; Skagen, 2006).

Already in 1971 Iceland elevated teacher education to the university and college level. It is situated at a college and a university. Since 1997

teacher education in Iceland can be said to have formally lived up to the requirement that it must be research-based. Today, teacher education is a three-year bachelor's degree. In the period from 2005 to 2010 Iceland is systematically developing a structure of three-year basic teacher education (BA) and a two-year postgraduate course (MA) in line with the Bologna charter, so that it is only possible to obtain full teacher competence after five years of study (Aðalsteinsdóttir, 2006).

With its new university law of 2007, Greenland decided to transfer teacher education from the Teachers' Training School of Greenland (*Grønlands seminarium*) to the University of Greenland. According to the status of the university, it is obliged to deliver research-based education at the highest international level within its subject areas (Grønlands Hjemmestyre, 2007). At the Faroe Islands a similar process of moving teacher education from the 'seminarium' to the university has been initiated.

Today Denmark is the only Nordic country that does not have or is preparing to launch a research-based teacher education programme. In Denmark, teacher education was up until 2007 placed at 18 'seminariums'. Since 2008 these form part of eight university colleges without research obligations. The university colleges are meant to ally with universities via a so-called-research connection. In the teacher education reform of 2006, it was emphasised that results from national as well as international research and development (R&D) are to be introduced in subject teaching. In Demark, teacher education is a four-year study leading to a professional Bachelor's degree, which affords admission to some (few) Master programmes at the universities (Rasmussen, 2006; Rasmussen *et al.*, 2007).

The 'seminarium' tradition

Evaluations of the Nordic teacher education programmes show that the 'seminarium' tradition which is not attached to scientific activity still plays a significant role. In Sweden, it has been a challenge to combine the 'seminarium' tradition for teacher education with the basic school and the university tradition of teacher education with upper secondary education since the closing of teacher education at 'seminariums' (Askling, 2006, p. 93). In Norway they speak about 'the death of the 'seminarium' contract'. But what is meant by the 'seminarium' tradition and what is a 'seminarium' contract? Inger Anne Kvalbein explains this

very succinctly: In the 'seminarium' tradition and within the 'seminarium' contract, students exchanged part of their freedom and time for a social community which then shouldered a responsibility for them. Emphasis was placed on the social environment of the education, and the teachers assumed responsibility for the student – unlike the ideal university teacher, who only assumes responsibility for the subject. After entering into the 'seminarium' contract, students are led through the study and, if they do not commit fatal mistakes along the way, they end up with a diploma (Kvalbein, 2003, p. 103, 2006, p. 280).

Students already denounced this contract some time ago, not the least in Norway and Denmark. Students want to keep their freedom during their education, which means that they develop strategies for not attending classes and for getting out of assignments because the contract has not been denounced by the institutions and the teachers in these countries. The evaluation of Danish teacher education shows that the culture is very much characterised by 'students who hold regular jobs and therefore have limited time for studies', and that students find it easy to complete their education (EVA, 2003, p. 39). It is a major problem for education that a large number of students do not show up for classes and those who show up do so in unpredictable patterns (EVA, 2003, s. 87). The evaluation of Norwegian teacher education concludes that many students' work performance are below the acceptable level (NOKUT, 2005, p. 31).

The cancellation of the 'seminarium' contract also causes difficulties for the 'seminarium' tradition of distinguishing between two aims, one directed at the profession, and the other directed at socialisation (*Bildung*). The aim of professionalism is usually related to the subject-matter part of the education, while the aim of socialisation is related to the students' personal development, their clarification of their own values and development of an identity as a teacher. A strong tradition of seeing this part of education as best maintained in an interaction between students implies students being present in teaching. The students' one-sided termination of the contract creates serious problems, not the least for this part of education and it demonstrates a conflict in teacher education which reflects the fact that teacher education in the Nordic countries was as far back as the 1960s-70s defined as a study without taking on the full consequences of this.

This problem is closely examined in the evaluation of Danish teacher education. Here it is seen as a result of the placement of teacher education between study-based education and interaction-based education in which the interaction-based part, by emphasising the importance of personal development, presupposes the presence of students in class. Teacher education is placed in a void between an open study and something which is more school-like (EVA, 2003, p. 87). This has resulted in teaching that to a wide degree adapts to these conditions by making fewer and less demands on students, and by writing down expectations of academic performance. The 'seminarium' contract has been unilaterally denounced by students, while the institutions and the teachers still, and to a large extent, maintain an idea of a contract with the consequence that the academic level in teacher education has been lowered.

The legislation on teacher education has also tried to preserve the contract. In 1997, compulsory participation was introduced into Danish teacher education. Compulsory participation is not the same as compulsory attendance; it merely means that the student is required to take an active part in education as organised by the 'seminarium'. When it became obvious that this provision did not work, compulsory attendance, which has been repealed by the Teacher Education Act of 1966, was reintroduced by the act of 2006, although only during the first year of study and in course-related practice. Instead of giving up the 'seminarium' contract which the students no longer voluntarily follow, the implied contract has been replaced by requirements. One may assume this happened because the political system finds it more important to preserve the 'seminarium' tradition than to develop teacher education into a research-based study. In Denmark, and to some degree also in Norway, the 'seminarium' tradition seems to be an impediment to the development of the research-based teacher education the environment is calling for.

Subjects and subject didactics versus pedagogy

Understanding of the endeavour to make teacher education a research-based study can be based on the abovementioned distinction between the theory of reflexivity and scientific theory. From a sociological systems theory perspective, the relationship between theory and practice can only be observed through a theoretical reflection. The distinction between theory and practice only appears when it is

actualised from a theoretical perspective. In that case, pedagogy as a theory is established, but that is as a reflexive theory of the education system and the theory of reflexivity observes education as a task, not as a problem or a question that can be answered scientifically: '… education can never be science, and therefore cannot carry out its own reflection as science' (Luhmann & Schorr, n.d., p. 408). Pedagogy as a theory of reflection aims at the education system's self-corrections through own self-produced criteria for success and failure.

Pedagogy as a theory of reflection is characterised by normative ideals of the moral or ideologically cultured man. In this, pedagogy has failed in its obligation to generate knowledge about the problems educational practice is struggling with (Rasmussen, 2000, s. 46). The normative aspect is of course not irrelevant, but its significance is only related to one of the two codes that form the useful/useless code, namely the code of reasonability. This is most likely why we have witnessed a scaling down of pedagogy in favour of general didactics and particularly subject didactics in teacher education during the last few decades. This has happened concurrently with efforts to make teacher education more research-based. This scaling down of pedagogy is particularly evident in Denmark and Norway, but not in Finland, and has taken place despite pedagogy within the 'seminarium' tradition because its general character has been seen as a subject with a certain priority (Løvlie, 2003). Pedagogy is aimed at tying the different parts of teacher education together; to be 'the glue of the teacher education programmes'.

In both the Danish and Norwegian evaluation the students believe that teaching in school subjects is only to a modest degree related to the didactical and methodological challenges in actual practice. They find that they are ill prepared to teach school subjects, and that it is difficult to see the relevance of teaching in teacher education (NOKUT, 2006, p. 53). In 2002, pedagogy in Danish teacher education was evaluated. From this evaluation it became clear that the students have a vague understanding of the subject. They see pedagogy as a subject in which they work with different theories (theory of science, theory of Bildung, educational theory, sociological theory etc.) with the aim to develop the students' philosophy of man and society through considerations on fundamental questions. Pedagogy is occupied with descriptions of educators', philosophers' and sociologists' thoughts on education and teaching. The teaching is often done in a traditional academic way,

where these descriptions are seen as a goal in itself, while they are not related to the kind of problems a teacher will face in their professional practice. Pedagogy is considered an attitude-subject in which values are given high priority. In the Danish evaluation, the students believe that the theories are only marginally relevant for professional practice (EVA, 2002, p. 108f.).

Pedagogy has left the instructive/not- instructive code and therefore taken up a marginal position in teacher education. This has happened even though pedagogy in its early definition, for instance that of Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher, followed this code closely. Schleiermacher called attention to the fact that religious or political instructions of practice were no longer sufficient in modern society. Rather, there was a need for knowledge about *how* processes of teaching takes place and *how* it is possible to influence them (Schleiermacher, 1957, p. 28ff.). This is probably the reason that general didactics and subject didactics in particular have gained influence. One major reason is pedagogy's weak and didactics strong bond with educational research. It seems pedagogy would be better able to maintain its function in teacher education if a clearer distinction between its knowledge part and its socialisation part were made, and if the knowledge part were given a more prominent position for considerations and reflections on practice.

Subject didactics definitely seems able to provide teachers with valid, advisable knowledge about what will be useful in their teaching practice. The observed optimism concerning didactical research is mirrored in the evaluations of Nordic teacher education programmes, which is evident in their advocacy of the strengthening of subject didactics in the programmes and of the strengthening of teacher educators' subject didactic knowledge. Concurrently, the evaluations find that results of empirical subject didactic research are only rarely adopted when teaching in teacher education. In the Danish evaluation, it is recommended that the teacher educators are given further university education in subject didactics (EVA, 2003, p. 51). In the Norwegian evaluation it is recommended that the subject didactical part of the programme is strengthened and that subject didactic research at the institutions is also strengthened (NOKUT, 2006, p. 79). In the Swedish evaluation, it is concluded that, in accordance with the intentions of the programme, it should be evident that students become better prepared

to be able to relate (critically) to subject didactic research results, and to continually follow subject didactic research (Högskoleverket, 2005, p. 138).

Conclusion

Today teacher education is part of university education in all Nordic countries, except Denmark. Within the university system, though, teacher education is in an exceptional position, which can mostly be explained by the difficulties the universities more or less struggle with in finding a viable alternative to the 'seminarium' tradition. A distinction between an internal and an external view on teacher education make this difficulty exceptionally evident. From the internal perspective, it is clear that elements such as 'personal development' and 'clarification of own values as a teacher' are emphasised, while elements like 'subject knowledge', 'didactical knowledge' and 'methodological knowledge' and 'competencies related to the practice of teaching' are considered more important from an external perspective. The external perspective often connects the difficulties and problems of the school with deficiencies in teacher education. The 'seminarium' tradition seems to be a hindrance for the development of the Nordic teacher education programmes into research-based programmes. It is, of course, important that such programmes do not reduce the importance of practice knowledge but anchor practice knowledge in educational research-based results. It seems to be a necessary precondition for the development of useful and relevant professional knowledge that teacher education be transformed into research-based education.

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Didactical Design Research for Teaching as a Design Profession

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1 Introduction

In her address to the TEPE Conference Hannele Niemi (2008) outlined why and how we should advance research in and on teacher education. In particular she drew attention to an understanding of research as practice-driven co-operation between academics and practitioners which she described as Mode 2. She also drew attention to the importance of creativity in Higher Education with reference to the Creativity Project (EUA, 2007). This paper is intended to complement the ideas contained in this important contribution and aims to highlight the importance of the creative design dimension when thinking about both research and practice in the field of teaching and teacher education. The ideas outlined in this paper have developed from an exploration of differences between traditions in relation to teaching and learning, based upon a comparison of the Anglo-American curriculum tradition and the Continental European tradition of *Didaktik,* as discussed in Hudson (2008). Particular attention has been given to the notion of *Didaktik Analysis* (Klafki, 2000, first ed. 1958) for both the development of professional practice and for the purposes of educational research. Subsequently this approach has been applied to thinking about the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to support learning and teaching (Hudson, ibid), the focus of which is on the design of teaching situations, pedagogical activities and learning environments, which aims to address the *what, why* and *how* of ICT use in relation to the learner, technology and specific content selected from the wider societal and cultural context.

This paper focuses in particular on the role of research in relation to the Didactical design process against a background discussion on the nature of design and the conception of teaching as a design profession. The role of design research in relation to this process is discussed at a range of levels from the macro to the micro. This provides the basis of an

Integrative Didactical Design (IDD) framework which is proposed as a pre-condition for the advancement of teaching as a design profession. Recent and current examples of the application of this philosophy through approaches to the development of ICT for learning are presented.

2 Didactical Analysis

A key feature of Didaktik is the emphasis that is placed upon significance, meaning and intentionality (or purpose) from the outset of the process of preparation for teaching. This arises from the conception of Didaktik as a human science with the central purpose of Bildung or categorical formation (*kategoriale Bildung*) which can be seen as an unfolding of unique individuality of the learner in relation to exemplary concepts, languages and tools. Thus, in his discussion of lesson preparation Klafki (1995, 2000) observes that it is through Didactical Analysis – of the kind that can be initiated by reflection on the five questions that he offered – that the interplay between experience and reflection and the relationship between theory and practice are made concrete in the form of decisions for planning teaching-studying-learning.

This emphasis on significance and meaning making is reflected in Klafki's (1958/2000) five questions which were developed in order to counteract the objectivism of previous thinkers: the value of any content can only be ascertained with reference to individual learners and with a particular historical situation in mind, with its attendant past and anticipated future. Thus he asks:

1. What wider or general sense or reality do these contents exemplify and open up for the learner? What basic phenomenon or fundamental principle, what law, criterion, problem, method, technique or attitude can be grasped by dealing with this content as an 'example'?
2. What significance does the content in question or the experience, knowledge, ability or skill to be acquired through this topic already possess in the minds of learners? What significance should it have from a pedagogical point of view?
3. What constitutes the topic's significance for the learner's future?

4. What is the structure of the content which has been placed into a specifically pedagogical perspective by questions 1, 2 and 3?
5. What are the special cases, phenomena, situations, experiments, persons, elements of aesthetic experience and so forth, in terms of which the structure of the content in question can become interesting, stimulating, approachable, conceivable, or vivid for learners?

However, we need to recognise the 'draft character' of preparation and also the need for openness on the part of teachers to new situations, impulses, and the difficulties that arise in the moment, this openness of mind being a key criterion of the teacher's pedagogical skill. Further, lesson preparation can be seen as merely the thoughtful design of one or several opportunities for particular students to make fruitful encounters with particular contents of education but we need to be aware of the common misinterpretation that lesson planning is first and foremost, or even exclusively, concerned with the 'how' of the situation, i.e. methods. Accordingly, the search for method is seen as the final, though necessary step, in good preparation. Thus, in summarising Didaktik Analysis Klafki (1995, 2000) describes it as 'the subsumption of all the mental effort directed at aspects of content', at the what of instruction and education ('Bildung') which is to be distinguished from the how – which he sees as a topic of a theory of learning methods ('Methodik'). Yet on further reflection it seems that the contrast that is made between Didaktik and Methodik is too polarised a distinction and the significance of design in the process of planning and preparation seems to be underplayed. It is the case that lesson preparation without prior Didaktik Analysis would be 'merely the thoughtful design' of potentially fruitful encounters for students. This question is returned to later in this chapter.

This perspective has a strong resonance with the position of Shulman (1986) who emphasises the way in which a professional is seen to be concerned not only with the *how*, but also with the *what* and *why*. In both Klafki's and Shulman's perspectives, the teacher is seen to be in command not only of procedure but also of content and rationale. Shulman forcefully drew our attention to the fact that a professional is seen to be concerned not only with the *'how'*, but also with the *'what and why'*:

'The teacher is not only '*master*' (my italics) of procedure but also of content and rationale, and capable of explaining why something has to be done. The teacher is capable of reflection leading to self knowledge, the metacognitive awareness that distinguishes '*draftsman*' (my italics) from architect, bookkeeper from auditor' (Shulman, 1986, p. 13).

A key tool for the analysis of the complex relations between ***teacher, student*** and ***content*** in the teaching-studying-learning process is the ***Didaktik triad***, as it is described. As Kansanen and Meri (1999) emphasise, the Didaktik triad should be treated as a whole, although this is almost impossible to do in practice. They point out that the most common approach is to take the *pedagogical relation* between the teacher and the student(s) as a starting point. However, the relationship between the teacher and the content also needs to be considered and, consequently, the teacher's competence is brought into focus. He or she has to be in command of this complex situation.

Kansanen and Meri also note that teaching in itself does not necessarily imply learning and, therefore, the preferred term for the activities of students is 'studying'. It is through studying that the instructional process can be observed, while the invisible part of this relation may be learning. A central aspect of the teacher's task is seen to lie in guiding this relation.

In other words, within the Didaktik tradition the didactical relation is a relation to another relation: the teacher's activities are focused not on the students, and not on the content, but on the students' relation to the content. Kansanen and Meri therefore see focusing on this *set* of relationships as the core of a teacher's professionalism. In view of the complexity of this set of relations as it manifests itself in any situation, it is difficult to think that the didactical relation could be organised universally, or according to some technical rules. Consequently, teachers' own professional judgement, practical theories and pedagogical thinking are seen to be of vital importance for success in learning.

As Westbury (2000) highlights, curriculum theory seeks to provide a structured framework for thinking about institutional issues. As a result of the influence of what is widely regarded as the core text of the field (Tyler 1949), a managerial framework for curriculum development and

specification, and subsequently for the control and evaluation of the educational service delivery, has developed. Technologies for curriculum-making, for writing behavioural objectives, for 'instruction', test development and curriculum evaluation follow from this framework. This structure is seen to offer a rationale in that it is assumed that it is possible to specify a set of orderly steps setting out how an optimal curriculum can be developed for a national, regional or local school system. Teachers become the invisible agents of such a system, and are seen as animated and directed by the system, rather than as sources of animation for the system. Accordingly, as a further consequence of this perspective, teachers become viewed as a (if not the) major brake on the innovation, change and reform that might be considered by policy-makers as necessary for the system.

In contrast, the tradition of Didaktik provides a framework which places the teaching and associated questions of design – and not the curriculum – at the heart of the teaching-studying-learning process. This follows from the emphasis that is placed upon Didactical Analysis and from the relative professional autonomy of the teacher within this tradition. Further, it provides a framework for teachers' thinking about the most basic how, what and why questions around their work, once again having a strong resonance with the position of Shulman (1986).

3 A historical perspective on Didactical Design

In his writing about the construction of the concept of curriculum on the Wisconsin frontier, Herbert Kliebard refers to how Dewey was troubled in 1901 about the failure of many educational reforms. He writes about how, 'with astonishing regularity, promising pedagogical innovations had made their appearance, enjoyed a brief day in the sun, and then quietly vanished' (Kliebard 1999, p. 9). Dewey (1901) highlighted the way in which the grouping of children in classes, the process of grading, the machinery of devising courses of study and the selection and assignment of teachers to their work are all intimately bound to the very core of the educational process. In drawing attention to the way in which the organisation and management of schools may sustain or undermine pedagogical change, he also highlighted an incompatibility between the organisation and management of schools and many pedagogical reforms.

The impact of grading on the curriculum and teaching is the subject of particular attention. Kliebard (1999) outlines the way in which calls for the grading of pupils in country schools in Wisconsin became common around the 1860s. It signalled a shift in terms of thinking about subjects as purveyors of desirable qualities of mind or character to becoming repositories of specific things that had to be learned in some kind of logical progression. In relation to this process of classification, Kliebard (ibid.) cites Hamilton (1989) who described the associated emergence of the concept of 'class' in a European context which was synonymous with grading or 'grade' or what was referred to by Dewey as 'the grouping of children in classes'. In particular, he draws attention to the movement for grading which was led by Aaron Picket (1863, p 183) who called for 'not only a system of uniform gradation, but also of uniform instruction and studies for each grade'. This signalled the beginning of a move away from the dominant form of education at that time which was founded on the teacher listening to individual recitations based on assignments made from textbooks. The system of classification proposed by Picket (ibid.) was based on sets of what would now be seen as curricular objectives for each of the grades combined with specified standards of achievement tied in to each level.

A key contribution to the wider implementation of this system was led by a superintendant of schools, Henry Clay Speer, who advocated the establishment of a centralised state bureaucracy and argued that teachers had neither the training nor the ingenuity to devise their own courses of study. Designing the school curriculum was not seen as either the province of the teacher or of the textbook but rather of a few professionally trained specialists. Speer (1878, pp. 22-23) is quoted as asserting that teachers are 'master workmen … not architects … There is no genius wanted. Good intelligent, discreet teachers are needed.' Kliebard (1999, p 18) notes how this was a signal of what was to become a defining feature of the American curriculum tradition in the twentieth century i.e. 'the virtual isolation of the *design* of the formal curriculum from its execution in the classroom'. Thus teachers were being asked on the one hand to engage in the more difficult task of ensemble teaching whilst, on the other, they were being asked to implement a curriculum dictated not via a textbook but rather from another external authority. As Kliebard observes, this transfer of the responsibility for curriculum **design** carried with it significant implications in relation to the status of the largely female teaching force compared with the predominantly

male administrators. The relevance of this issue to the present day context of teacher education in Europe is vividly conveyed by Sheila Drudy in her chapter in this monograph (Drudy, 2008).

4 On the nature of design

A dictionary definition of design in the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary includes the statement: 'When you design something (…) you plan and create a picture of it in your mind and you make a detailed drawing of it from which it can be built or made.' It also refers to planning, preparing and deciding on all aspects of course of study and an assessment activity. A thesaurus search on the word highlights planning, invention, drawing, pattern and intention. Planning is associated with intention and meaning, whilst invention is related to creating, conceiving, originating and constructing. It is in the combination of these dimensions of planning and invention or creative design that the professional judgement of the teacher is brought into focus. This is in sharp contrast with the reductionism and instrumentalism described above and may be seen as a consequence of the emphasis within categorical formation (*kategoriale Bildung)* on an unfolding of unique individuality in relation to exemplary concepts, languages and tools rather than seeing these simply as instruments to be acquired, developed and subsequently tested. Indeed the term 'design' can be applied to mechanical procedures related to making tools and controlling systems. However in thinking about didactics, about learning and teaching, the concept of a mechanical system with the aim of producing a uniform and standardised product as efficiently as possible is not an appropriate metaphor. Instead, we have to think in terms of living, relatively complex human systems which are continually growing and changing along with their elements (Senge et al., 2004).

5 Teaching as a design profession

Evidence of the importance of design in the professional development of teachers can be found in the outcomes of a study by Huberman (2001) which focused on those approaches that can lead to sustained change in teaching practices. The organisation of networks of subject teachers have

been central to this approach involving collaborative activities for the design of the curriculum: Huberman suggests 'the kind of problem solving … (which) … *assumes* that the process of learning, experimentation and change will be moderately complex, novel, ambiguous, contradictory and conflicting' that has been focused on the whole 'instructional' process with particular attention to the 'instructional' design process (Huberman 2001. p. 155).

Further, the importance of design in education has been highlighted by Clark and Yinger (1987) who proposed the idea of teaching as 'design profession'. This is echoed in the concept of teacher education as a related inter-disciplinary and applied 'design science' by Simon (1970, pp. 55-58) who highlighted both the importance of this way of thinking and the resistance to accepting design sciences in the academic world. He highlighted the way in which the historical and traditional task of the scientific disciplines was to teach about natural things whereas the task of engineering schools, for example, was to teach about artificial things and in particular how to design and build artefacts with particular desired properties. He argued that this conception of design is at the core of all professional training, giving the examples of architecture, medicine, business, law and education in addition to engineering. Moreover, he argued that it is this aspect of design which is the principal distinguishing characteristic between the professions and the sciences. He also highlighted the way in which the dominance of the natural science paradigm has influenced the curricula of the professional schools, arguing that 'in view of the key role of design in professional activity, it is ironic that in this century the natural sciences have almost driven the sciences of the artificial from the professional school curricula' (Simon, ibid.). He also argued that the older kind of professional school did not know how to educate for professional design at an intellectual level appropriate to a university and for the consequent need for 'a science of design, a body of intellectually tough, analytic, partly formalizable, partly empirical doctrine about the design process' (Simon, ibid.).

The design profession perspective on teaching stands in sharp contrast with that of the teacher as a technician. The conception of the teacher as a technician leads to a view of teaching that is over-simplified, and its associated complexities are ignored and its demands diminished.

6 The Didactical Design process

At its simplest level, teaching can be seen as a process of design, interaction, evaluation and re-design. In contrast, from a Didactical perspective much emphasis is placed on the *process* of Didactical Analysis, as exemplified by Wolfgang Klafki's five questions described above. However, Klafki seems to downplay the process of design in the planning process by referring to it as 'merely the thoughtful design' of potentially fruitful encounters for students. Further, I would argue that whilst the first three of Klafki's five questions are undoubtedly concerned with the process of Didactical Analysis, questions four and five are in fact concerned with a process of creative design; I quote once more:

- What is the structure of the content which has been placed into a specifically pedagogical perspective by questions 1, 2 and 3?
- What are the special cases, phenomena, situations, experiments, persons, elements of aesthetic experience, and so forth, in terms of which the structure of the content in question can become interesting, stimulating, approachable, conceivable, or vivid for learners?

Accordingly, we can consider the process of Didactical Design as an adaptation of the traditional Instructional Design model in the form of a cyclical process of Analysis, Design, Development, Interaction and Evaluation leading through to a subsequent process of re-design, using and expanding Wolfgang Klafki's Didaktik Analysis. Hence some of the key questions in each phase may include:

Analysis phase:

- What wider or general sense or reality do these contents exemplify and open up for the learner? What basic phenomenon or fundamental principle, what law, criterion, problem, method, technique or attitude can be grasped by dealing with this content as an 'example'?
- What significance does the content in question or the experience, knowledge, ability or skill to be acquired through this topic already possess in the minds of the learners? What significance should it have from a pedagogical point of view?
- What constitutes the topic's significance for the learners' future?

Design phase:

- What is the structure of the content which has been placed into a specifically pedagogical perspective by questions 1, 2 and 3?
- What are the special cases, phenomena, situations, experiments, persons, elements of aesthetic experience and so forth, in terms of which the structure of the content in question can become interesting, stimulating, approachable, conceivable, or vivid for learners?
- What teaching situations, pedagogical activities and learning environments are to be designed?

Development phase:

- What are the potential roles for ICT and media in terms of designing teaching situations, pedagogical activities and learning environments?
- What materials and resources are to be developed to support the creation of teaching situations, pedagogical activities and learning environments?
- What is the role of the teacher?

Interaction phase:

- How will students interact with the technology, with the teacher and with each other?
- How will students demonstrate their achievement of intended learning outcomes?

Evaluation phase:

- How will students evaluate what they have learned in a formative way? How will this activity be recorded? How does this aspect relate to formal processes of summative assessment, examination and accreditation?
- How will the quality of the teaching situations, pedagogical activities and learning environments be evaluated?
- How will the quality of the student learning experience be evaluated?

Finally, I would argue that, by expanding Klafki's Didaktik Analysis to include an emphasis on processes of creative design, this model provides a way of giving attention to questions of significance, meaning

and intentionality in relation to ICT-supported learning from the outset of planning and preparation of teaching-studying-learning processes.

7 On the nature of Design Research

The role of research is seen as a process of critical inquiry that operates at a number of levels from the macro level of the wider system, such as the course or curriculum level, to the micro level of the teacher **as a researcher** and also of the student **as an active learner** through inquiry-based approaches to learning, as discussed further in Hudson (2008). The tradition of critical-constructive Didaktik (Klafki 1998) has offered a distinctive approach to educational research since it was developed in order to address the complexity of the processes of teaching and learning and the methodologies and methods adopted, whilst maintaining attention to considerations of meaning making within a wider societal context. This approach involves a synthesis of method groups/methodologies involving *historical-hermeneutical methods, empirical methods and methods of social analysis and ideology critique* though the synthesis of these is not a simple addition. The use of ICT in particular raises important ideological questions and calls for an ideology critique and a critical attitude in relation to whose interests are being served especially.

Central to the philosophy outlined in Hudson (ibid) is a belief in the importance of knowledge sharing and collaborative knowledge building in learning communities e.g. between individuals, across subject and professional boundaries, both within and between learning organisations. In developing this approach, a strong emphasis has been placed on collaborative action research and reflective practice in relation to research and development activity. This has been conceptualised within an integrative holistic model of design research that aims to integrate the processes of research, evaluation and dissemination. The development of this approach has been based on the work of the Design-Based Research Collective (DBRC, 2003) and the related work of Bannan-Ritland (2003). More traditional methods of evaluation research emphasise measurement against a set of standards during the process of formative evaluation followed by a rigorous process of summative evaluation. In contrast, design-based research is based on the view that successful innovation is a joint product of the designed intervention and

the context (DBRC, 2003). The goal of design-based research has been to inquire into the nature of learning in the context of complex human systems and to generate models of successful innovation, rather than particular artefacts, courses or programmes.

The main goal of the Integrative Didactical Design (IDD) framework (Hudson, ibid) is to support the construction of propositions for actions in relation to **both** teaching and learning and to design and construct teaching situations, pedagogical activities and learning environments that enable **both** teachers and learners to put these propositions into practice. Specifically, the framework aims to address the ways in which we might systematically create, test, evaluate and disseminate teaching and learning interventions that will have a maximum impact on practice and contribute significantly to the development of theory about **both** teaching and learning. The role of evaluation in both a formative and summative sense is an important part of the process of inquiry. Whilst research questions give direction to inquiry, evaluation of the local and broader impact plays an important part.

With regard to evaluation, the distinctions outlined by Chelimsky (1997) are seen as constructive and presented as: (i) evaluation for *accountability;* (ii) evaluation for *development;* and (iii) evaluation for the *creation of new knowledge*. Whilst it is necessary to address all three aspects, the most important aspects for research and development purposes are to be found in the second and third categories. An approach based on thinking in terms of development can be seen as evaluation for *collective learning* through action and reflection. Dialogue is seen as a necessary prerequisite for such reflection and a key challenge for any development project is to achieve a culture of openness to such self-critical reflection. In thinking about evaluation for the *creation of new knowledge* there is a need to recognise the social embeddedness of knowledge, a consequence of which is that knowledge is not a given but is rather built up interactively and **emerges** through social relationships and in social practices. Such a perspective can be described as *emergent evaluation* and highlights the distinction between 'knowledge and know how' which can also be seen as a distinction between 'learning about' and 'learning to be' as illuminated by Seeley Brown and Adler (2008) in their discussion about social learning and social software/Web 2.0 and illustrated in Figure 1 below. In terms of thinking about the web that we have become used to (which we might refer to as Web 1.0), this can

characterised as an environment within which content in the form of websites can be created and maintained for others to read. The phenomenon described as Web 2.0 reflects the change that has taken place more recently which allows users to create content in such a way that allows others to both read and write in the environment. A major feature of social software is that it enables people to connect together, providing a space in which they can interact and share ideas, experiences and knowledge. Social software may be seen as a feature of Web 2.0 and can be described as the tools used to communicate in different settings such as one-to-many (blog or podcast) and many-to-many (wiki). Seeley Brown and Adler (ibid) highlight the way in which a traditional education system is designed in such a way that students may spend years **learning about** a subject and that only after accumulating sufficient explicit knowledge can they begin to acquire the tacit knowledge which is gained through practice in **learning to be** an active practitioner in a professional field.

They also highlight the way in which ICT-supported social learning encourages the practice of 'productive inquiry' as described by John Dewey, which is the process of seeking knowledge as and when it is needed to carry out a particular situated task in a particular context and which in effect 'reverses the flow' of the traditional system.

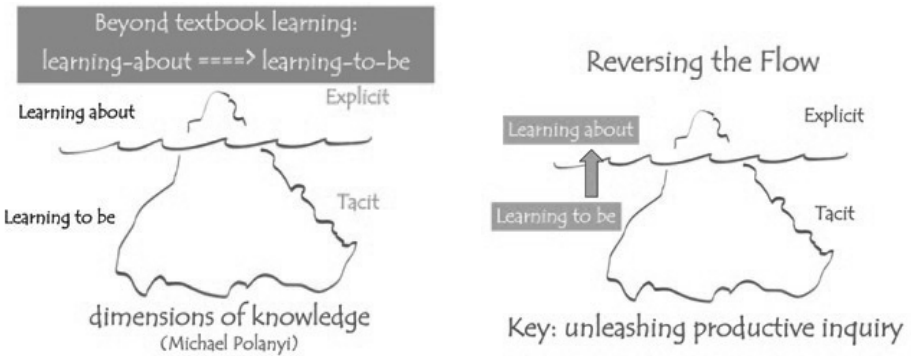

Figure 1. Social Learning and Web 2.0 from Brown and Adler (2008)

Examples of the application of this philosophy and approach to development, as outlined in this section, in relation to ICT-supported learning are described in the following section.

8 Didactical Design for ICT-supported learning

Developing an international online MSc programme

The first example of the application of such an approach was the development of the MSc e-Learning Multimedia and Consultancy that resulted from the Advanced Curriculum Development Masters in Multimedia Education and Consultancy Project (MMM) supported by the European Commission under the Socrates-Erasmus programme (1998-2001). The MMM project was co-ordinated by Pädagogische Hochschule in Linz and arose from collaboration within the Thematic Network for Teacher Education in Europe (TNTEE) that was funded by the European Commission (1996-99). This resulted in significant collaboration in terms of didactical design between the University of Oulu, Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen (HAN University) in the Netherlands and Sheffield Hallam University in the UK.

In associated research (Hudson, 2006; Hudson et al., 2006), we identified the importance of social dimensions for successful learning communities to form and also the need to design for 'social infrastructure' from the outset of the design process. We highlighted the need to develop such social infrastructure for successful professional development to occur. Such social infrastructure is seen to be achieved through the development of the interpersonal bonds that build up gradually among network members and which, just as significantly, can be seen to outlive the network group itself and in this process create a stronger and more lasting network that can be built upon in the future. Accordingly, the very processes of curriculum development, team teaching and collaborative research also provide opportunities for the professional development of the tutors involved. As such, networking is not only seen to be an activity for innovation but is also enacted and experienced as a process of innovation. In our experience it is through the focus on development with attention to the whole learning design process that successful networking has been achieved.

A particularly significant aspect of the Socrates-Erasmus MMM project has been the way in which it led to a programme of development that was sustained over a 10-year period. In turn, this project built upon the achievements of earlier EU programmes and projects e.g. TNTEE and T3: Telematics for Teacher Training. Further, this project has a

significant local impact as the poster (Hudson, 2005) in Appendix 1 aims to illustrate by identifying key events and curriculum development milestones, alongside associated cycles of action research within a design research framework. This local impact fed directly into a successful application at a national level in 2004.

Process-based Assessment through Blended Learning

The P@RABALE Project: Process Based Assessment through Blended Learning is a collaborative development between Umeå University, Karlstad University and Linköping University (Hudson et al., 2008). It is supported by funding (2007-08) from the Swedish Agency for Networks and Co-operation in Higher Education/Myndigheten för nätverk och samarbete inom högre utbildning (NSHU). This project builds on an existing partnership related to ongoing development work in the field of ICT and learning at all three partner institutions. Research carried out at the macro/system level at Umeå University has been reported on by Carina Granberg (2007).

The project has been designed together with students and aims to strengthen ICT use as well as pedagogical communication between the campus and schools involved in VFU (*verksamhetsförlagd utbildning/*practice based education). The project's main objective is to develop the use of process-based assessment through which students, supported by teacher educators, negotiate individual learning goals within a wider framework of Didactical course goals. The students are using a variety of ICT tools and media such as digital portfolios, blogs, video papers and video conferencing to support communication within a blended learning framework (Garrison and Kanuka, 2004).

In this project we have focused increasing attention on the aspect of reflective dialogues through a process of emergent evaluation. The developmental aim has been to offer students at different stages in their teacher education the opportunity of reflective conversations which have the goal of building a better understanding of the skills to be developed as outlined in the Examensordning. Mentors and local teacher educators are seen to have a crucial role in scaffolding these conversations in order to facilitate the development of a greater self-awareness of the difficulties associated with assessment. A main outcome of this process involves a process of self-evaluation through the writing and rewriting of the self-assessment. It is expected that

outcomes of this study will include the illumination of students' understanding of 'reflection' and how this relates to their perceptions of achievement in relation to the goals in their courses of study and to the national goals in Examensordningen. It will provide insights into the affordances and constraints of ICT involving the use of social software to support learning through internal and external reflective dialogue (Granberg, 2008) and hopefully will give direction to ways of strengthening the integration, communication and collaboration between teacher education and schools regarding VFU.

9 Concluding comments

In focussing upon the process of Didactical Design this chapter has aimed to highlight the essentially creative nature of the process which underlies the design of teaching situations, pedagogical activities and learning environments. In particular, it is in the combination of these dimensions of planning and invention or creative design that the professional judgement of the teacher is brought into focus.

This lies in sharp contrast with the reductionism and instrumentalism that follows from the isolation of the *design* of the formal curriculum from its execution in the classroom with its consequent impact on the view of the teacher as a technician who is simply concerned with implementation of the pre-designed curriculum in a classroom setting. The conception of teaching as a design profession has particular implications for the nature of teacher education as an inter-disciplinary and applied design science. Such a broad perspective brings into focus the central role of the teacher in the creative design of teaching-studying-learning processes for student-centred learning. It also highlights the importance of the transformative dimension of teaching that involves all the analogies, metaphors and images which build bridges between the teacher's understanding and the student's learning.

The advent of Web 2.0 and in particular of social software applications offers a radically different perspective on the potential use of technology than that which has historically dominated the field of instructional design. The dramatically expanding use of Web 2.0 may be seen as being not so much about a change in technology, but rather about a change in philosophy which calls into question many institutionalised managed

learning environments which are generally nothing more than mere repositories of information.

The role of research in relation to the didactical design process is considered to be a process of critical inquiry with profound implications for teacher education. Accordingly, it may be sobering to reflect on the amount of money spent on educational research in North America which Burkhardt and Schoenfeld (2003) have shown is estimated to be about 0.01% of total educational expenditure. In contrast, health researchers set a goal of 3%, whilst at the same time high technology businesses in the commercial world typically spend 15-20% of their turnover on research. Further, if we take the example of the multinational pharmaceutical company Pfizer, in 1999 it spent USD 200 million of its USD 20 billion research budget on research related to treatments for animals. This amount was seven times more than that spent by the US government in the same year on educational research. The need to consider issues of research in and on teacher education in relation to support and also in relation to the development of associated research cultures has not been stronger at any previous moment in history. However, the opportunities for advancement of the field might also have not been greater ever before.

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Appendix 1

Integrating research and development strategies in the context of developing the MSc in E-learning, Multimedia and Consultancy (ELMAC) programme (1998-2005)

Year	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Key developments and events	SOCRATES *Advanced Curriculum Development &MM Multimedia Education and Consultancy* (1998-2001) Arising from *Thematic Network for Teacher Education in Europe* Building on EC DG XIII_C Telematics project *T3: Telematics for Teacher Training* (University of Oslo, 1996-98) Validation of MSc in *E-learning, Multimedia and Consultancy* (May 2000)			Re-validation of MSc (May 2002)	Key roles of MSc team members in Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy of School/Division of Education at Sheffield Hallam University	Higher Education Funding Council Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) initiative. Key roles of MSc team members - pre-planning for CETL on *Promoting Learner Autonomy*	
Key curriculum development milestones	ICT in Open Learning Environments trial (tutors as students)	Digital Media Applications trial	Communication, Consultancy and Change (CCC) trial	Open Flexible Learning Environments (OFLE) 1	Digital Media Applications (DMA) 1	Communication, Consultancy and Change (CCC) 1	Research Methodologies (R&M) 1	Project Studies (PS) 1	Dissertation (DS) 1	First student-led MSc Conference in Nijmegen, February 2005
Action research cycles	Nature (*critical and emancipatory*) Approach (*systematic*) Activities (*cycles*) Techniques and methods (*eclectic*)									
Integrative Learning Design (ILD) Framework stage	Informed exploration		Enactment/Evaluation - Local impact		Enactment/Evaluation - Local impact		Enactment/Evaluation - Local impact		Enactment/Evaluation - Local impact	
	Evaluation – Broader impact >>	>>	>>	>>	>>	>>	>>	>>	>>	>>

Goal of the ILD Framework

To construct propositions about teaching and learning and also to engineer and construct effective learning environments (using software and other artefacts) that allow teachers and learners to make these propositions actionable.

Broad phases of ILD Framework

Informed Exploration: this phase involves the problem identification, literature survey, problem definition, the planning of conceptual material, needs analysis and development of resources and pedagogical approaches.

Enactment: this phase involves the implementation of field trials for the prototype resources and pedagogical approaches and will be influenced by the evaluation stage leading to revisions and refinements over a number of cycles.

Evaluation - Local Impact: this phase involves an iterative process of formative evaluation, ongoing refinement of resources and pedagogical approaches and successful dissemination and adoption in a broader context and to a broader audience

Evaluation - Broader Impact: this phase extends the traditional "dissemination" phase of projects to becoming a process that relates to adoption and adaptation across the wider academic community and also considers the consequences of the uses of the products of the research.

Some guiding research questions for the ELMAC development (1998-2005)

What new opportunities are afforded by the technology for collaborative learning and for supporting open and flexible e-Learning environments?

How best can we facilitate purposeful engagement of autonomous learners in open and flexible e-Learning environments?

What are the optimal conditions for achieving well orchestrated interdependence in open and flexible e-Learning environments?

Source: Ravet, S. (2003) The role of design in research. The Integrative learning design framework. Educational Research for, 3(3), 27-34.

Appendix: TEPE 2008 Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

The second TEPE Conference, hosted by the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana from 21st to 23rd February 2008, constituted a European forum of around 100 participants from 23 countries representing most European regions in discussions on various aspects of teacher education policy in Europe. These ***conclusions and recommendations*** aim to synthesise key messages of the Conference.

Aims of the conference

Three main clusters of questions were addressed around the following themes:

- ***Advancing Research in and on Teacher Education***
- ***Mobility and the European Dimension in Teacher Education***
- ***Evaluation Cultures in Teacher Education***

Over 30 plenary and workshop presentations focused on good practices, strategies and comparative analyses of teacher education in Europe and provided an impressive background for further exchange of views, debates and the search for common positions in workshops. A panel with representatives of various stakeholders including teacher education institutions, students, school teachers, trade unions as well as representatives of the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the European Training Foundation and the European Network on Teacher Education Policies (ENTEP) provided an additional opportunity to address issues from a variety of angles and to build common principles for future action.

The momentum for teacher education in Europe

"Europeanisation" in (higher) education has reached a point at which key details at the institutional and disciplinary levels have to be resolved for it to move to the next qualitative level. Conference discussions confirmed that today this situation demands sustained dialogue, reflection, exchange and co-operation underpinned by research in the very processes of reform and renewal at European universities. The academic world is able – and willing – to provide policy analysis in order to strengthen a process of decision making both at the institutional level and European level in a further process of "concerting".

The development of educational policy is a genuine task for universities and higher education institutions that calls for their contribution at this time. This is especially the case in the field of ***teacher education***. In the last two to three decades, Teacher Education has become a ***large and important segment of higher education*** with, on average, about 10% of all students, mainly future teachers, educators and education experts. Recent policy documents at national as well as at European levels increasingly stress the ***importance of primary and secondary education in implementing Lifelong Learning and in building and sustaining the Knowledge Society***. Therefore, Teacher Education can and should respond to new challenges: effective Teacher Education Policy should be developed as a transparent "chapter" of a wider Education Policy, both at a national as well as at a European level.

Teacher education policy must also be viewed from an institutional perspective. Studies in Teacher Education Policy can link several research fields that are inherent to Faculties of Teacher Education (regardless of how they are described and/or organised) giving them an interdisciplinary basis and character and signifying areas to be included in quality assurance in teacher education: for example subject didactics, ICT and learning, curriculum development, assessment and evaluation, quality issues, equality in education, special educational needs, moral philosophy and an ethic of care in education and education for democratic citizenship and the public good. Research in Education and/or Teacher Education Policies is ***a precondition for improved governance of institutions and systems*** (for example quality enhancement and assurance, comparability and compatibility of qualifications) as well as ***for improved teaching and learning*** at teacher

education institutions (for example the preparation of future teachers, pre-service courses and continuing professional development, graduate programmes, doctoral studies and research programmes).

The Conference participants welcomed the recently published communication from the European Commission (August 2007) on "***Improving the Quality of Teacher Education***" and agreed that it provides new opportunities to synthesise previous discussions and to build a new common approach. Universities and higher education institutions in general should take a central role in this field. During a period when we move steadily closer towards achieving the goal of the ***European Higher Education Area*** as declared by the Bologna Process, it is most urgent that these issues are (re-)addressed from today's point of view and on the basis of collegial discussion on questions of common concern in order to identify appropriate solutions.

Key recommendations

To all stakeholders: Universities and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of Teacher Education, Student Unions, Teacher Unions, Teaching Councils, Governments and European Bodies (in particular the European Commission and the Council of Europe)

Improving the Image of Teaching and the Status of the Teaching Profession

All stakeholders should:

- take action to improve the image of teaching and the status of the teaching profession, including the image and status of teacher education, in all European countries,
- support multidisciplinary platforms for peer learning between policy makers, practitioners and researchers at institutional, national and European Level.

Developing Teacher Education Policy

Teacher Education Institutions should be recognised as partners in the process of policy development based on a strengthening their commitment to this process.

To all stakeholders: in particular to Universities and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of Teacher Education

Advancing Research in and on Teacher Education

All stakeholders should:

- support the development of research cultures in teacher education and the strengthening of the research base on teacher education as an inter-disciplinary field of study,
- support the advancement of professionalism in teacher education and the development of cultures of lifelong learning.

Promoting Mobility and the European Dimension in Teacher Education

All stakeholders should:

- strengthen their commitment to mobility of people and ideas in teacher education through the innovative implementation of established practices in novel contexts,
- support the development of networking for professional development and organisational learning as part of a dynamic process of internationalisation.

Supporting Cultures for Quality Improvement in Teacher Education

All stakeholders should move away from an emphasis on evaluation mechanisms of accountability and towards approaches based on evaluation for development and organisational learning and the consequent development of **cultures for quality improvement**.

To Governments

Governments should:

- improve the necessary preconditions and provisions for the continued professional development of teachers as a priority,
- introduce professional development programmes for teachers at the induction stage where this does not exist and strengthen these further where they do so exist,
- reconsider the low share of Teacher Education in overall student mobility programmes (e.g. Erasmus, Tempus) and encourage Universities and other HEIs to promote greater student mobility as part of a dynamic process of internationalisation in European education systems in general,

- promote the development of Teacher Education study programmes at all three cycles of Higher Education.

To the European Commission

The European Commission should:

- consider the issues of research in and on Education, including Teacher Education, in EU research programmes,
- reconsider the low share of Teacher Education in overall student mobility programmes.

To the Council of the European Union:

- the adoption of the proposal from the European Commission on "Improving the Quality of Teacher Education" on 15 November 2007 is warmly welcomed.

Abstracts

Pavel Zgaga
Mobility and the European Dimension in Teacher Education

This paper deals with the new challenges teacher education is encountering in the context of the Bologna Process and general reforms of higher education systems in European countries. It focuses specifically on issues of mobility and the European dimension. The basic presupposition is that the Bologna Process brings a new yet serious challenge to teacher education at the present stage. The teacher education of today is characterised by fast developments that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. Yet, is there enough strength within teacher education to proceed with the pace of development seen in previous years? Are the concepts and ideas for further progress elaborated and clear? What are the weaknesses which could endanger the already achieved developmental level? With regard to national (teacher) education, the 'European dimension' remains a vague concept but its clear elaboration has never been so needed than today. The concept of employability raises more questions than answers. In the last few years, formal structural changes in higher education in general have often overshadowed the need for content changes. In comparison to other study areas, the mobility of students (and staff) in the area of teacher education remains weak and is even decreasing. Against this background, the paper argues that teacher education should not stop and be satisfied with the achievements of the last two decades but is obliged to respond pro-actively to the key 'Bologna' issues that have been developed, disputed and elaborated in the direction of concrete proposals. The development of a genuine teacher education policy for Europe is, therefore, a must (not so much from the governmental as from the institutional point of view) if we really want to keep teacher education at the achieved level and enable further developments.

Key words: higher education vs. teacher education; the Bologna Process; mobility; European dimension; teacher education policy

Sheelagh Drudy

Professionalism, performativity and care: whither teacher education for a gendered profession in Europe?

This paper draws together current research on gender, teaching, professionalism, teacher education and changes in universities. It critically analyses the impact of recent developments on teaching – one of the most highly feminised professions in Western societies. It reflects on the dominant discourses on teaching. While a number of different discourses may be found in teaching, official discourses are increasingly drawn from the perspective of performativity. It is suggested that there is a disjuncture between this discourse and the other discourses integral to the profession. In particular, an ethical dimension and a discourse of care have been found to be a very important part of teachers' professional identity. Most teacher education currently takes place within university environments, themselves imbued with cultures of performativity and audit cultures. This creates its own set of tensions. The paper argues that, in order to understand teaching and teacher education, we must take into account the location of teacher education within higher education and the way higher education has been affected by global changes in its structures and cultures. A central assumption in this paper is that teacher education and educational research should be central elements in the contribution of universities to the deepening of democracy and the public good.

Key words: teacher education; discourses; care; performativity; professionalism; feminisation; policy

Eve Eisenschmidt & Erika Löfström

The Significance of the European Commission's Policy Paper 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education': Perspectives of Estonian Teachers, Teacher Educators and Policy-makers ''

The Commission of the European Communities recently prepared a policy paper entitled 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education' (2007) for the European Parliament. The communication describes a vision of a European teaching profession characterised by well-qualified professionals: lifelong learners, with a willingness to be mobile and engage in collaborative partnerships. The aim of our study was to analyse Estonian teaching professionals' views of the policy paper.

For the purpose of our study, nine teachers, teacher educators and policy-makers provided their interpretations of the EU policy paper in written and focus-group interviews. The teachers regarded the paper as an excellent guideline, but felt it was at the same time idealistic. The teachers believed the policy paper quite accurately reflects the current state of Estonian teacher education in many ways. The teachers emphasised that the document needs systematic implementation and decisions on the national level, but raised the question of how actually to carry through the implementation of the ideas. Time limitations and dissatisfaction with salaries were regarded as obstacles to the development of the teaching profession. Further, the question of school leadership was emphasised. The teacher educators and policy-makers regarded the national support structures, including the induction year and mentoring system, as good solutions, but identified the need to expand the support structures beyond the novice year. They also identified development needs with regard to teachers' skills and competence to engage in reflective practice and research. Joint research initiatives between schools and universities were strongly encouraged.

The teachers' interpretations of the policy paper were analysed against Estonian policy documents such as the Teachers' Standard (Õpetaja, 2005), which describes the teacher's role and competencies, and 'The Framework Guidelines for Teacher Education' (2000), which describes general and special requirements of teacher education. The teachers' interpretations and the analysis of these against the Estonian policy documents provide useful insights for the further development of national teacher education policy.

Key words: teacher education; teacher education policy; Quality, European Commission policy paper; Estonia

Andy Ash and Lesley Burgess

Transition and Translation: Increasing Teacher Mobility and Extending the European Dimension in Education

This paper draws together the experience of tutors and students who took part in an inter-institutional pilot project conducted by the secondary initial teacher education (ITE) course at the Institute of Education (IoE), University of London, England and the Faculty of Education, University of Turku, Finland. The project set out to critically examine the pedagogic approaches of the two institutions, share reflections and identify possible implications for future practice. Finland was selected because of its excellent educational achievement in comparison with other European countries; namely, the fact that it continues to excel in the PISA ratings (OECD, 2001; OECD, 2004; OECD, 2007). The IoE participants were keen to identify both the pedagogical and cultural reasons for this success and consider how this could both challenge and inform Beginning Teachers' (BTs) developing pedagogical practice.

Turku has a higher proportion of ethnic minority pupils in its school population than any other city in Finland and this number is set to increase. Therefore, ITE tutors (IT) at Turku University are keen to understand how they can enable student teachers to develop their pedagogical practice in response to this changing cultural context. They believe that what happens in Turku will inform future policies and practices in other parts of the country where immigration continues to grow but at a slower pace. It is their perception that the IoE student teachers working in London's multi-ethnic schools are developing a more in-depth understanding of interculturalism and could help their Finnish counterparts identify relevant pedagogical strategies in response to their changing school population – a *transition* in their practice.

This paper critically reflects on the first part of this pilot project, namely the observations of learning and teaching at the Turku 'Normal' School by IoE students and tutors. These initial observations are informed by a comparative study carried out by IoE students highlighting their developing understanding of the relationship between pedagogy and political/social/economic 'drivers' in the development of educational policies and practices – a *translation* of different experiences.

Key words: Initial Teacher Education, pedagogical practice, student mobility, Europe and cultural context

Eila Heikkilä

Professional Development of Educationalists in the Perspective of European Lifelong Learning Programmes 2007-2013

The paper researches the professional development of educationalists in European Lifelong Learning Programmes 2007-2013. The paper argues that international activities in the European Programmes provide opportunities and challenges for educationalists to build their professional identities outside the context of their educational institutions. In the first section of the paper, two current theories of education, namely teachers' democratic professionalism and expansive learning, are researched to support the argument of opportunities and challenges of educationalists' professional development in international activities. Further, a theoretical framework of communities of practice is researched to explain how learning and professional development takes place in international programmes. In the second section of the paper, competencies and learning outcomes that international activities may develop are studied to understand what the nature of professional learning is by educationalists in international activities. Finally, the paper argues that competencies acquired by educationalists as informal learning outcomes in international activities, e.g. intercultural competencies, could be validated and recognised as formal learning and as part of teacher qualifications in national qualification systems. Recognition of the professional development of educationalists in international activities could promote professional career development possibilities and improve the attractiveness of education professions. It could also promote the wider participation of educationalists in international activities and the improved integration of EU Lifelong Learning Programmes in the national education systems of the member states in the 2007-2013 period.

Key words: educationalists' professional development, international activities, international communities of practice, key competencies, recognition of informal learning

Nikos Papadakis

'*The future ain't what it used to be*'. EU Education Policy and Teacher's Role: Sketching the political background of a paradigm shift.

The present study deals with the quest for a 'reformed' role of teachers within the new education-learning paradigm (in Kuhn's terms). It seeks a contextually embedded approach to such an issue, laying emphasis on the highly influential, supranational initiative called the Lisbon Strategy, and more specifically on the Work Programme 'Education & Training 2010'. Any endeavour to analyse the role of teachers and the current teacher education policy cannot overlook the effects of the new forms of internationalisation and the emerging transformations in learning, H(uman)R(esource)D(evelopment), the economy and labour market. On these grounds, policy initiatives, discursive practices and interest politics concerning the re-conceptualisation of both the teaching-learning process and the teachers' role in it are examined within the public policies complex.

Key words: public policies in education & training, professional development of teachers, learning pathways, in-service training, learning outcomes, quality, supranational policy, Lisbon Agenda, internationalisation, H(uman)R(espourse)D(evelopment), economy and labour market, social cohesion and inclusivity

Marco Snoek, Ursula Uzerli, Michael Schratz

Developing Teacher Education Policies through peer Learning

As part of the European agenda on Education & Training 2010 the European Commission has established a number of Clusters to facilitate peer learning between European member states. Within these Clusters, peer learning activities are organised whereby representatives of member states exchange examples of good policy practice and explore the implications of the EU's ambitions for new education policies.
One of these Clusters is the Cluster Teachers & Trainers, which has organised peer learning activities on a variety of topics concerning teachers and teacher education: continuous professional development; schools as learning communities; school leadership; preparing teachers (and student teachers) to teach in culturally diverse classroom settings; partnership between VET schools and companies; relations between schools and teacher education institutes. From these peer learning activities policy recommendations are derived that can support ministries in member states to improve their policies on teachers and teacher education.

In our paper we present a synthesis of the work of the Cluster Teachers & Trainers after two years of experience. Bridging the different peer learning activities and reports, we will investigate the outcomes and effectiveness of the peer learning activities.

Key words: European policies; open method of co-ordination; peer learning; policy development; teacher education policy

Inger Erixon Arreman and Magnus Strömgren

The Employability of Swedish Student Teacher Alumni

In recent years, 'employability' has become an increasingly central concept in higher education, in no small part since it constitutes an important aspect of the Bologna Process. The project 'Teachers' employability' is a project carried out on behalf of the Faculty of Teacher Education at Umeå University – one of the major providers of teacher education in Sweden – and forms part of a broader university effort to evaluate and increase employability. The aim of the project is to examine the situation of the university's student teachers after graduation, as well as to find out how the former students and their employers view their education.

The study is based on the longitudinal individual database ASTRID, questionnaires and interviews. This paper reports findings from the project, focusing on: 1) the employment situation, income development and mobility patterns of recent alumni (the class of 2000); and 2) primary employers' (school leaders) view of the quality and usefulness of the present teacher education curriculum. While employability is generally high, there are significant differences in career paths and income development depending on, for instance, the type of degree and place of residence. The interviews with school leaders reveal that, although the present curriculum is perceived to have certain general limitations, it is viewed as being more suited to pre-school rather than comprehensive school and gymnasium teacher education.

Key words: employability; curricula; databases; interviews; school leaders; Sweden

Hannele Niemi

Advancing Research into and during Teacher Education

The presentation explores why teachers should work as a researcher in their profession and how the research component can be integrated with pre- and in-service teacher education programmes. The article introduces how we can promote research-based orientation in primary and secondary teacher education. It also provides examples of how in-service training can support teachers' work in local schools, and how these activities are closely connected with research projects. Teachers need a critical mind and the ability to reflect. If the teaching profession aims to have a high professional status, teacher education must prepare teachers to work using an evidence-based approach to their work. This is only possible if they have the competence to use different kinds of evidence, including the evidence that research provides. They must have also the capacity to carry out action research in their classrooms and schools. The pre-service teacher education curriculum provides a foundation but, without research-oriented in-service training, teachers' potentiality to renew and develop their own profession will stagnate. When promoting evidence-based practice, it is not enough that teachers are provided with information about research, offering it as a top-down process. They need the competence to acquire different kinds of evidence which informs their practice and decisions. It seems that, without research, methodological studies and experiences of research processes, it is very difficult to internalise an evidence-based orientation.

Key words: teacher education; evidence-based; research-based; knowledge creation; action research; teacher as a researcher

Paul Garland

Action theory in Habermas and educational practices

In this paper I explore the potential for viewing education as an 'unrestricted communication community' (Habermas 1990: 88), using categorisations from Habermas of different kinds of action as analytical tools for examining educational practices. For the paper, I pursue two main themes: 1) how the concept of communicative action in relation to the three forms of knowledge-constitutive interest (Habermas 1987) can be operationalised in educational discourse; and 2) how the distinguishing of communicative action and discourse ethics from other forms of action may be used to understand the interaction taking place in educational contexts to develop evaluative tools for examining teaching practices. The potential of this framework for encouraging critical reflection on teaching, on critical incidents in teaching, peer observation, or tutor observation of novice practitioners is also discussed in relation to the forms of reflexivity that Habermas identifies as necessary conditions of human freedom (1996). Taken together, these different constructs form a powerful framework for critically examining the truth and validity claims both explicitly made and implied in educational practices from the perspectives of the individual as well as the professional community to which the individual belongs. It is accepted that a rational, communicative action aimed at achieving a consensus does not necessarily dominate either the school or the higher education institution's normal mode of discourse. Thus, the paper also differentiates other forms of action, incorporating these into the overall critical framework.

Key words: communicative action, action theories, Habermas

Janez Vogrinc, Janez Krek

Quality Assurance, Action Research and the Concept of a Reflective Practitioner

In the article we present action research as a factor in the teacher's professional development and as part of processes for ensuring quality in education. Action research is characteristically performed by practitioners, in this case teachers, and directly oriented to an improvement in practice. We analyse the main characteristics of action research and present the results of empirical research which were used to determine whether there are any differences between teachers who have experience in research and those without such experience in terms of their interest in participation in the research process and at which stage of professional development the teachers are prepared to do research the most. We discuss the concept of the reflective practitioner which emphasises the particular skills needed to reflect constructively upon ongoing experience as a way of improving the quality and effectiveness of the teacher's work. The concept encourages teachers and student teachers to reflect upon the effectiveness of a lesson or series of lessons through an attempt to evaluate what was learned, by whom, and how more effective learning might take place in the future. As such, it involves a careful evaluation by teachers of their own classroom performance, planning, assessment and so on, in addition to and in conjunction with evaluations of pupils' conduct and achievements.

Key words: action research; teacher-researcher; reflective practitioner; quality in education

Dragana Bjekić, Lidija Zlatić, Gordana Čaprić

Research (evaluation) procedures of the pre-service and in-service education of communication competent teachers

Communication competence is a teacher's important formative professional competence. The education of communication competent teachers takes various parts in teachers' educational systems. The complexity of communication education in teachers' pre-service education and teachers' in-service education is caused by the structure of communication competence. Thus, measuring the effects of communication skills, knowledge and attitudes development in teachers' education curricula is a complex and multilevel process. Some of the procedures for evaluating communication competence education and procedures for evaluating teaching communication have been applied to teachers' communication competence education.

We looked at the characteristics of pre-service and in-service education of communication competent teachers. Moreover, we presented some methods of monitoring and evaluating communication competence education, as well as the specific instruments of evaluating communication competence and education. We considered the applicability of these methods and instruments and suggested some methods, procedures and techniques in evaluating teachers' communication competence pre-service and in-service education.

Key words: teacher; communication competence; teachers' education; procedures of communication education evaluation

Alajdin Abazi, Veronika Kareva, Zamir Dika, Heather Henshaw

Enhancing the Quality of Higher Education Learning and Teaching – A Case Study from South East European University

This case study provides an active example of how a higher education institution has sought to enhance self-reflection by focusing on the quality of learning and teaching, staff teaching performance and training and development. The paper summarises the key historical, socio-economic and educational factors which have shaped the current position in the university and influenced the university's drive towards continuous improvement. It also refers to external guidance which has supported development. The study touches on the university's strategies for academic staff appointment, performance management, individual and institutional processes and their influence on evaluative practice. It describes the current teacher education offered by the university which includes embedded pedagogical undergraduate courses linked with languages, Master's studies in Educational Management and external training for school directors. It demonstrates how teacher education is integrated with whole institution change through the development and implementation of a Teaching Observation Scheme, describing the scheme's rationale and intended outcomes, the process of development, the pilot project and implementation and monitoring. This is intended to contribute to the debate on renewing evaluation cultures within education and to support the university' mission of high quality teaching and learning as a key pre-condition for the university's success within a competitive educational market.

Key words: quality, learning, teaching, self-evaluation, observation

Cara Angela

Teacher Education Policies in the Republic of Moldova

This article reveals basic conceptions of the standards for continuous training of teachers in the Republic of Moldova as elaborated by Cara Angela, PhD, (co-ordinator), Prof. Gutu Vladimir, PhD, Prof. Gremalschi Anatol, PhD, Solovei Rodica, PhD , Baciu Sergiu, PhD.

It is also concerned with teacher education policies in the Republic of Moldova from the perspective of changes that are set to take place in the Moldovan system of teachers' continuous training:

- A transition from a system governed by offers (institutions offer a certain type of continuous training, while teachers, having no other alternative, accept the offer) to a system adjusted to teachers' real demands, interests and needs;
- increasing the accessibility of the system for a wide range of training providers and, consequently, raising the number of training offers;
- encouraging free competition, but also partnerships between various training providers, which will lead to an improvement of the general quality of offers; and
- encouraging teachers to assume and create their own continuous training itinerary.

Taking into account the abovementioned points, we present national strategies concerning teachers' continuous training in the Republic of Moldova, the general objectives of continuous professional training, and a reference framework of the standards elaboration for the continuous training of general secondary education teachers of the Republic of Moldova.

Key words: teacher education policies; permanent education; continuous training; professional credits; professional skills; ensuring education quality; standards for continuous training

Vlasta Vizek Vidović

Researching teacher education and teacher practice: The Croatian perspective

The aim of the paper is to outline current developments in teacher education research in Croatia with an emphasis on changes introduced by implementation of the Bologna Process. Two aspects of teacher education research, namely research on and research in teacher education, are explored using a phenomenological approach. Research on teacher education has been grouped in three categories: policy-oriented research; curriculum development and Bologna Process monitoring studies; and small-scale research conducted in specific settings such as university classrooms and practicing schools. Research in teacher education has been divided into four categories: research related to subject-content knowledge; research related to the educational sciences; interdisciplinary research connecting subject-content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (teaching methodologies); and evaluation research. For each category a short description of the state of art as well as outlines of its strengths and weaknesses are given. In the conclusion some general recommendations for strengthening the area of teacher education research are offered.

Key words: teacher education, evidence-based teacher education, research on teacher education, research in teacher education, Bologna Process

Zdenka Gadušová, Eva Malá, Ľubomír Zelenický

New Competencies in Slovak Teacher Training Programmes

The paper presents current changes and a reflection on the Bologna principles in teacher education in Slovakia. In connection with the globalisation of society and Slovakia's joining of the EU, the presentation points out some new requirements and tasks that education must satisfy. It is expected that these new educational requirements have a direct influence on further development of the theory of education (didactics) and through it they must also find their place in innovative study programmes for teachers whose changed role in the education process is to focus more on the development of competencies than on passing knowledge on to learners. Getting the teachers ready for these tasks involves identifying, developing and training them in the new competencies.

Key words: Bologna principles; Slovak education system; teacher training; study programmes; new competencies

Jens Rasmussen

Nordic teacher education programmes in a period of transition: The end of a well-established and long tradition of 'seminarium'-based education?

Scandinavian teacher-education programmes have been evaluated in the last five years: Denmark 2003, Sweden 2005, and Norway 2006. One conclusion was that the subject of pedagogy (educational theory) needed revitalisation. The subject is ascribed many hours and study credit points in programmes but does not seem to be optimal for education as such or for the other subjects in the teacher-education programmes. After a brief introduction to contemporary challenges to teacher-education, I shall apply sociological systems theory to introduce a distinction between three different forms of knowledge that are important for teacher education, present the similarities and differences between pedagogy and subject didactics in the Nordic teacher-education programmes as they can be derived from the evaluations, and finally analyse the 'seminarium'-based status of pedagogy and subject didactics viewed in relation to demands for research-based teacher education.

Key words: teacher education programmes, pedagogy, subject didactics, forms of knowledge

Brian Hudson

Didactical Design Research for Teaching as a Design Profession

This paper builds on earlier work which explored differences between traditions in relation to teaching and learning. It outlines the development of an approach to teaching and the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in particular to support learning based on the notion of Didactical Analysis. Central to this approach is the design of teaching situations, pedagogical activities and learning environments which aim to address the what, why and how of ICT use. The discussion focuses on the nature of design, a history of didactic design, the conception of teaching as a design profession and didactic design for ICT-supported learning. The nature of design research in particular is discussed at a range of levels from the macro to the micro, involving a consideration of its role at the course or curriculum level and in relation to the individual teacher and student. These ideas form the basis of an Integrative Didactical Design (IDD) framework, and examples of the application of this philosophy and approach to the development of ICT for learning are outlined.

Key words: didactical design; design research; teaching and learning; teacher education; ICT-supported learning; integrative didactical design (IDD)

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